



Mr John Shower ^{Obijt} 1715.

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SOME
MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE and DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. JOHN SHOWER,

Late Minister of the Gospel in London.

Wherein is inserted.

An Account of his Travels through
France, Italy, Germany and Holland, by a
Learned Gentleman that was his Compa-
nion beyond Sea, and his intimate Friend
ever since.

Together with his

FUNERAL-SERMON

Preach'd at

OLD-FURT, July 10. 1715.

By W. TONG. K.

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Mr. Bartolomew Sparrow



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I do not intend hereby, Sir, to make any assertion
able either for or against the validity of the many Do-
ctors that will now be found in them, for those I
myself am to account as well as I can; and I
therefore my self those Doctors who have been
themselves employed in matters of this Nature
will be my most favourable Judges; they know how
difficult



T O

Mr. Bartholomew Shower.

DEAR SIR,



Now present to you, and by your Hands to your good Brother and Sister, these brief Memoirs of the Life and Death of your excellent Father, together with the Sermon preach'd on the Occasion of his Funeral. You have undoubtedly the most immediate Right to them, and therefore it is proper for me to make use of your Name, as an Evidence that I have your Consent in publishing them to the World.

I do not intend hereby, Sir, to make you answerable either for their long Delay, or the many Defects that will now be found in them, for these I my self am to account as well as I can; and I promise my self those Readers who have been themselves employed in Matters of this Nature, will be my most favourable Judges; they know how

difficult a Thing it is to collect from several Hands and distant Places, even so few Materials as this small Narrative is composed of. And my Friends need not be told how unfit my infirm State of Health this severe Winter hath render'd me for this or any other part of my Work; I am sure, in my own Apprehensions, I was more like to have finished the Course of my own Life, than to have finished the Account of the much more valuable Life of Mr. Shower.

If these Things will be any Excuse for my Delay, they will also plead in favour of the many Defects of this Performance; when the Organ is so much out of Tune, how can it possibly give a melodious Sound? When a Man walks with a heavy Burthen upon his Shoulders, it is no wonder if he sometimes Stumbles or takes a false Step? As for Negligence of Stile, I own, it is become Natural to me; and if I had any great Inclination to the polite way of expressing myself, it is now too late for me to learn it.

It is chiefly from the Subject Matter of these Memoirs, that I expect their Acceptance and Usefulness; the serious Reader (of whatsoever Perswasion) will find something here that will meet with his own inward Sense and Experience, for as in Water Face answers to Face, so doth the Heart of Man to Man; and I am very well pleased to think, that those who have a nicer Taste, will find an agreeable Entertainment provided for them in the inserted Narrative of Mr. Shower's Travels.

DEDICATION. V

The whole is humbly recommended to the Blessing of the Great God, who is able, even by such means as these to glorify his own Name, and his free Grace, to confirm the Truth of the Gospel by a Cloud of Witnesses, many of whom being Dead, yet speak in behalf of the Reality and Excellence of Evangelical Holiness, and call upon us that survive to be sincere, stedfast and zealous in our holy Profession.

It is with great Satisfaction that I can speak to every One descended from Mr. J. Shower, as to those that I know were a great Comfort to him while he lived, and have chosen their Father's God to be their own God; I doubt not but God, even your own God, will give you his Blessing. We all rejoice with you, that God has spared the Lives of your dear Sister and Brother, who were successively brought so near to Death by a late dangerous Fever; we rejoice in your mutual tender Affections to one another, and in the good hopes we have, that in your Day and Places, you will all go on to honour your God, to adorn the Name and Memory of your good Father and Mother, that the same Faith, Meekness, Humility and Wisdom, that were not only in them, but in your more remote Ancestors, will abide in you also, till thereby you shall be made fully meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

For my own part, when I consider the many eminent Ministerial Qualifications that so many of my deceas'd Fathers and Brethren were possess'd of, I can meet with nothing that expresses more fully what

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what I feel in my own Soul, than that sweet and spiritual Poem of our Divine Herbert, which is called Aaron, and alludes to the holy Garments of the High-Priest described in Exod. cap. 28. you will allow me to insert it for the satisfaction of those that may have the same Opinion of it with my self.

Holiness on the Head,
Light and Perfection on the Breast,
Harmonious Bells below raising the Dead
To lead them unto Life and Rest;
Thus are true *Aarons* drest.

Profaneness in my Head,
Defects and Darknes in my Breast,
A Noise of Passions ringing me for Dead,
Unto a Place where is no rest;
Poor Priest thus am I drest.

Only another Head
I have, another Heart and Breast,
Another Musick making live not dead,
Without whom I could have no rest;
In him I am well drest.

Christ is my only Head,
My alone only Heart and Breast,
My only Musick striking me even dead,
That to the old Man I may rest,
And be in him new drest.

So

DEDICATION.

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So holy in my Head,
Perfect and Light, and my dear Breast,
My Doctrine tun'd by Christ, who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest.
Come, People, Aaron's drest.

I am sensible this Narrative of your Father's Life will be thought too short and general, and I cannot but regret my Loss and yours, that we have not been able to make use of that Diary which he so constantly kept for many Tears, (for you know he chose to write it in a Character only understood by himself) there we might have been sure to have found many memorable Transactions between God and his Soul, as well as Observations of Providential Conduct, which now must remain a Secret, as it seems he designed they should be.

But you and many more are faithful Witnesses of his Family Religion, how good an Example he gave you, how faithfully and tenderly he dealt with you about your Spiritual State, how desirous that every Person and Thing in his House might be sanctified by the Word and Prayer; and the Servants of the Family that lived so long with him, and when from him, could not be easy till they had come to him again, will never forget the peculiar Advantages they enjoyed under his Roof; their great Affection for him while living, and the uncommon Sorrow they have discovered for his Death, sufficiently shew, how well and suitable to his Character he walked in his House with an upright Heart.

I

I shall only add, if I could have foreseen that these short Memoirs would have stuck so long in my Hands, I should have been glad the Funeral-Sermon had been published before them, for I would do nothing that might look like any Disrespect to Mr. Shower, his Family or his Friends, who have so just a claim to the Service and Gratitude of

S I R,

Your most affectionate

Friend and Servant

W. TONG.





SOME
MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE and DEATH

Of the late Reverend

Mr. JOHN SHOWER.



It is a good Observation which the late very Ingenious and Devout Gentleman Mr. *Nelson* hath made in his *Life of Bishop Bull*, Page 3. 'That the Lives of good 'and excellent Men require skilful Pens, and that the Writer should be animated with a Portion of that Genius that formed the Person whose Character he draws for the Knowledge and Imitation of Posterity.

AFTER I have mentioned this, it might very well have been expected from me, that I
B should

should have altogether desisted from an Attempt of this Nature, having so little Pretence to such a Qualification, and have left the Work to some of those few that are like-minded to Mr. *Henry* and Mr. *Shower*, who naturally cared for the State of the Souls of Men.

BUT the Engagement I had (perhaps too hastily) laid my self under to a Work of this Nature, and the importunate Expectation of many, would not suffer me to depart from it: And tho' I am very sensible how small a Portion of that good Spirit that formed the Soul of Mr. *Shower*, I am possessed of; yet if by representing to my self and others that excellent Spirit, I may obtain Favour from God to be more thoroughly changed into it, I am assured it will be Time and Labour well spent.

Mr. JOHN SHOWER was born in the City of *Excester*, in the Parish of *St. Kerrian* or *St. Petrox*, and was baptiz'd May 18. A. D. 1657. His Parents were Persons of very good Reputation and great Usefulness.

HIS Father's Name was *William*, the Younger Son of a Gentleman in that Country. He was put Apprentice to a *French* Merchant in *Excester*, and followed the same Business himself, with good Success. He was very exemplary for his Charity to the Poor, and even when he had met with some Losses himself, would take the Opportunity to relieve those that were truly Necessitous, and would do it with great

great Willingness, as having put out so much into the best Fund and upon the best Securities; which brings to my Mind what I have heard many Years ago of a very Religious Gentleman and wealthy Merchant in *Derbyshire*, that having heard of the Loss of a Ship near *Hull*, in which he had Effects to the Value of 1500 *l.* or upwards, he presently called to his Cash-keeper, and ordered him to distribute a Hundred Pounds among such poor Ministers and Christians he directed; For (says he) if it be going by 1500 *l.* at a Lump, it's time to make sure of some Part of it, before it be all gone.

His Mother's Name was *Dorcas*, the Daughter of Mr. *John Anthony*, Merchant of the same Place, esteemed at that Time one of the best Families for Religion and Estate in that great and wealthy City. This Gentlewoman was a great Blessing to her Family, very strictly Pious, and of a most excellent Natural Temper.

Mr. JOHN SHOWER's Father died in the prime of his Days, about the Year 1661. he left a Widow and four Sons; they had a Daughter named *Hannah*, but she died a little before the Father. He left a competent Estate for them, and left them with a good Mother, who managed all her Concerns with very great Discretion, and much to the Advantage of her Family.

HER Eldest Son, Mr. *William Shower* was put to a Merchant, and is now living near the

Devises in *Wiltshire*, but under many Decays and Infirmities of Body, as I find in a Letter dated *July 27. 1715.* soon after the Death of our Mr. Shower, written by the Wife of this his Brother Mr. *William Shower*, to their Nephew here in Town, condoling with the Fatherless Children their great Loss, and kindly inviting them down into the Country.

Mr. JOHN SHOWER was their second Son; he very early discovered an Inclination to the Ministry, and a suitable Spirit and Capacity for it, and his good Mother was well pleased with such a Disposition of Mind, and gave him all the Encouragement and Advantages for it, that lay in her Power.

THE third Son was *Bartholomew*, afterwards Sir *Bartholomew* whom she bred up a Lawyer; and how famous he was in that Profession, what eminent Posts he held, and how he signaliz'd himself in Publick Affairs, both at the Bar and in Parliament, is too well known to need any farther mention here.

THE fourth and youngest Son was *Phineas*, who was bound Apprentice to Mr. *Harvey*, a Druggist in *London*, and has been dead many Years.

THE Spirit of God singled out our Mr. *John Shower* from the rest of the Family, to make him more eminently Useful in his Day and Place. He had the Honour to be related to several worthy Ministers in and about *Exeter*; the ever memorable Mr. *Trosse*, that Mirror of rich Grace and Mercy, was his Relation

tion by Marriage, and they had a great mutual Affection and Esteem for each other to the last.

HE was also related to the late eminently holy, zealous, useful Minister, Mr. Benjamin Hooper, who died May 1. 1715. after many Years of extraordinary Diligence, exemplary Holiness, and uncommon Success; he went off the Stage in those Raptures of Joy and Thankfulness, as will never be forgotten by those that were the Witnesses of them.

Mr. SHOWER had an Uncle an eminent Dissenting Minister in Exon, Mr. Downe, who took great Delight in this his Nephew, and encouraged him much in his Learning, and would frequently propose Cases to him, both in Grammar and Divinity, that had something curious and difficult in them, and would press him (who was ever noted for a Native Modesty) to speak his Thoughts about them, and expressed to his Mother the very great Satisfaction he had in her Son's Capacity, and the great Expectations he had from him.

AN aged Person that was very much in the Family of Mrs. Shower, well remembers that when he was very young, he was so grave and serious, so dutiful to his Mother, and so very diligent, that whenever she look'd upon him, she thought he was surely sanctified from his Infancy.

HE was very forward in his Learning; I find in Papers from different Hands, that he

was under the Care of one *Bradford*, a School-Master in *Exon*, another says of Mr. *Seddon*, both may be true, all agree that he was more observed for his good Capacity and great Industry than any other Youth in the School, that he very seldom or never spent his vacant Hours in the common Diversions that are every where allowed; he loved Retirement and Study from his Childhood, and that his Progress in Learning was such as might be very well expected from one of so sagacious, so thoughtful, and so diligent a Temper.

THE Fear of God appeared in him very early; one that was in his Mother's Family observed with Pleasure, and very well remembers, that when but a Child, he was constant to his secret Duties Morning and Evening; he had his Closer, and he loved to be much there, and would come from it with that serious Countenance, as has been seldom known in one so young, and was judged by all that observed him, as a Sign that he had a more than ordinary Sense of God impress'd on his Soul, while he was thus waiting on him. One well acquainted with him says, When he was very young, he was very much loved and admired by the best Christians, and particularly commended as making great Conscience of his Word, and redeeming his Time.

AFTER he had furnished himself with School Learning in his Native City, he was sent to *Taunton* in *Somersetshire*, and placed under the

Instruction of the Learned and Reverend Mr. *Warren*, who for many Years, and with great Success, kept up a private Academy, as the Reverend and very Learned Mr. *Franckland* did in the *North of England*; and I think those two Venerable Men were the first that run the Risque of much Trouble and Persecution, that they might train up a rising Generation of Ministers in those Principles and Ways which they themselves had suffered for, as really believing them to be most agreeable to the Word of God.

By the best Conjectures I can make, he entered upon his Academical Studies at *Taunton* about the Age of Fourteen, so well had he improved the Morning of his Time; and here he went on with the same Industry, Gravity and Seriousness, very much beloved by his Tutor, and esteemed by his Fellow-Students, and made a very good Progress in Rational Learning, for which he had a particular Relish.

AFTER some considerable Time spent at *Taunton*, he removed to *London*; his good Mother was willing to have him and his Brother placed in *London*, that she might be as near them, and as much with them as she could, and accordingly she removed with them to *London*, and there spent the rest of her Days in Holiness and Comfort.

I HAVE by me the Form of a Covenant drawn up with her own Hand, and signed and sealed by her, *July 23. 1663.* it

agrees very much with that in the Reverend Mr. Richard Allen's *Vindicia Pietatis*, tho' with some Variation; the Preface to this her Covenant, I take to be the result of her own Thoughts, and shall insert them in Honour to her Memory, and for the Instruction of all that read it. It begins thus:

Directions how to close soundly, solemnly and savingly with the Lord Jesus Christ; which I now desire to do by his Grace assisting of me.

' I AM willing to settle the State of my Soul,
' and make sure and thorough Work in
' Covenanting with God, as a Ground-work
' of Salvation, and a Business of unspeakable
' Moment; and therefore I do beseech the
' Lord, through Christ, to help me by the As-
' sistance of his Spirit, without which I can
' do nothing; here I would lay before me
' these Considerations.

' 1. I WOULD think seriously of my lost and
' undone Condition by Sin, and my utter In-
' ability ever to recover my self.

' 2. I CONSIDER how freely God offers to
' me in his Word to be my God in Christ,
' and accept of me if I will turn to him;
' and promiseth that I shall *live and not die*.

' 3. I CONSIDER how desperate my Condi-
' tion will be if I turn not, and how happy
' and blessed it will be if I turn to God.

' 4. I CONSIDER what is to be had in sin-
' ful Ways, and what is to be had in the
' World,

World, and how little they can do for me
if I should sit down contented with them.

5. I CONSIDER what Christ's Terms are,
and what Christ can and will do for me if
I accept him on his own Terms, if I can but
be content to forego all my Sins for him,
and submit to all his Offices, and run all
Inconveniences with him.

6. I WOULD consider what the Laws of
Christ are, how holy, strict, spiritual, bind-
ing me to Self-denial, and whether I can
upon Deliberation make Choice of them as
the Rule of my Life. Now, through Grace
I can truly say I find the prevailing Bent
of my Heart is for God and Christ against
Sin, and therefore now, in the most solemn
Manner as if the Lord were visible by, I
address my self unto Him.

THEN follows her express Covenant with
God, in the Close of which she adds; 'I
hereby testify to God, Angels and Men, my
Acceptance of, and Consent to all the Terms
of the Covenant of Grace, made with poor
Sinners in Christ, as particularly made with
me, and in Testification thereof, I do set
my Hand and Seal.

In my Closet in

Exon, June 23.

1663.

DORCAS SHOWER

THIS good Gentlewoman and her two Sons
John and Bartholomew being now at *London*, the
Elder was placed at *Newington-Green*, under
the Education of that polite and profound
Scholar,

Scholar, Mr. *Morton*; here he had a very agreeable Society and great Advantages, which according to his wonted Care and Diligence he faithfully improved, not declining but growing in Grace as well as useful Learning; in the Year 1674-5, the 18th Year of his Age, he solemnly renewed his Covenant with God after the Example of his good Mother, subscribed with his own Hand, and sealed with a double Seal, which is as follows.

Ex Alleni Vindic. Pietat. prima parte.

My Solemn Covenant with God.

‘ **O** MOST dreadful God, for the Passion
 ‘ of thy Son, I beseech thee to accept
 ‘ of thy poor Prodigal, now prostrating him-
 ‘ self at thy Door; I have fallen from thee
 ‘ by mine Iniquity, and am by Nature a
 ‘ Son of Death, and a Thousand Fold more
 ‘ a Child of Hell by my wicked Practice;
 ‘ but of thine infinite Grace thou hast pro-
 ‘ mised Mercy to me in Christ, if I will but
 ‘ turn to thee with all mine Heart; there-
 ‘ fore on the Call of thy Gospel I am now
 ‘ come in, and throwing down my Weapons,
 ‘ submit my self to thy Mercy; and because
 ‘ thou requirest, as the Condition of my Peace
 ‘ with thee, that I should put away mine
 ‘ Idols and be at Defiance with all thine
 ‘ Enemies, which I acknowledge I have wick-
 ‘ edly sided with against thee, I here from
 ‘ the bottom of my Heart renounce them
 ‘ all,

all, covenanting with thee not to allow my
self in any known Sin, but conscientiously to
use all the Means which I know thou hast
prescribed for the Death and utter Destru-
ction of all my Corruptions; and whereas
I have formerly Inordinately and Idolatrously
let out my Affections to the World, I do
here resign my Heart to thee that madest
it, humbly protesting before thy glorious
Majesty, that it is the firm Resolution of
my Heart (and that I do unfeignedly desire
Grace from thee, that when thou shalt call
me hereunto, I may practise this Resolution)
through thy Assistance, to forsake all that is
dear unto me in this World, rather than
turn from it to the Ways of Sin, and that
I will watch against all its Temptations,
whether of Prosperity or Adversity, lest they
should withdraw my Heart from thee, be-
seeching thee also to help me against the
Temptations of Satan, by whose wicked
Suggestions, I resolve, by thy Grace, ne-
ver to yield my self a Servant unto Sin;
and because my own Righteousness is but
filthy Rags, I renounce all Confidence
therein, and acknowledge that I am of my
self a hopeless, helpless undone Creature,
without Righteousness or Strength; and for
as much as thou hast of thy bottomless Mer-
cy offer'd most graciously to me, wretched
Sinner, to be again my God through Christ,
if I would accept of Thee, I call Heaven
and Earth to witness this Day, that I do
solemn-

‘solemnly avouch Thee for the Lord my
‘God, and with all possible Veneration, bow-
‘ing the Neck of my Soul under the Feet
‘of thy most sacred Majesty, I do here take
‘Thee, the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and
‘Holy Ghost, for my Portion and chief Good,
‘and do give up my Self, Body and Soul, for
‘thy Servant, promising and vowing to serve
‘Thee in Holiness and Righteousness all the
‘Days of my Life; and since thou hast ap-
‘pointed the Lord Jesus, as the only Means
‘of coming unto thee, I do here on the bend-
‘ed Knees of my Soul accept of Him, as the
‘only new and living Way, by which Sin-
‘ners may have access to Thee, and do here
‘solemnly join my self in a Marriage-Cove-
‘nant to Him. O blessed Jesus! I come to
‘Thee hungry and hardly bestead, poor, and
‘wretched, and miserable, and blind, and na-
‘ked, and a most loathsome, polluted Wretch,
‘a guilty, condemned Malefactor, unworthy
‘for ever to wash the Feet of the Servants
‘of my Lord, much more to be solemnly
‘married to the King of Glory; but sith such
‘is thine unparallel’d Love, I do here with
‘all my Powers accept Thee, and do take
‘Thee for my Head and Husband, for Better
‘for Worse, for Richer for Poorer, for all
‘Times and Conditions, to Love, Honour,
‘and Obey Thee before all others, and this
‘to the Death; I remember Thee in all thy
‘Offices, I renounce mine own Worthiness,
‘and avow Thee to be the Lord my Righte-
‘ousness;

ousness; I renounce mine own Wisdom, and
and take Thee for mine only Guide; I re-
nounce mine own Will, and take thy Word
for my Law; and since thou hast told me I
must suffer if I will reign, I do here cove-
nant with Thee to take my Lot as it falls
with Thee, and by thy Grace assisting, to
run all Hazards with Thee, verily suppo-
sing that neither Life nor Death shall part
between me and Thee; and because thou
hast been pleased to give me thy holy Laws
as the Rule of my Life, and the Way in
which I should walk to thy Kingdom, I
do here willingly put my Neck under thy
Yoke, and set my Shoulder to thy Burden,
subscribing to all thy Laws as holy, just, and
good, I solemnly take them as the Rule of
my Words, Thoughts, and Actions, promi-
sing that though my Flesh contradict and
rebel, yet I will endeavour to order my Life
according to thy Direction, not allowing my
self in the neglect of any thing I know to
be my Duty; only because through the Frail-
ty of my Flesh I am subject to many Fail-
ings, I am bold humbly to protest, that un-
allowed Miscarriages shall not make void this
Covenant, for so Thou hast said.

Now Almighty God, Searcher of Hearts,
Thou knowest I make this Covenant this
Day without any known Guile or Reserva-
tion, begging that if Thou espiest any Flaw
or Falshood, Thou wouldest discover it to me
to do it aright. Now Glory be to Thee,

*

' O

' O God the Father, whom from this Day
 ' forward I shall be bold to look upon as my
 ' God and Father, that ever Thou shouldest
 ' find out such a Way for the Recovery of
 ' undone Sinners ! Glory be to Thee, O God
 ' the Son, who had loved me, and washed
 ' me in thine own Blood, and art now be-
 ' come my Saviour and Redeemer ! Glory be
 ' to God the Holy Ghost, who by thy Al-
 ' mighty Power hast turned my Heart from
 ' Sin to God ! O dreadful Jehovah, Father,
 ' Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art now become
 ' my Covenant God, and I through thine in-
 ' finite Grace am become thy Covenant Ser-
 ' vant, and the Covenant which I have made
 ' on Earth, let it be ratified in Heaven ! *Amen.*

Newington-Green,

Jan. 31. 1674-5.

Ætat. Ann. 18.

JOHN SHOWER.

UNDER these Advantages he went on, and
 his profiting was so manifest to all, that be-
 fore he was quite Twenty Years old, by the
 Encouragement of no less a Divine than Dr.
Manton, as well as his own Tutor, he was
 encouraged to prepare himself to preach as a
 Candidate for the Ministry.

His intimate Friend and Fellow-Labourer,
 Mr. *Timothy Rogers*, who has lived to see ma-
 ny of his Brethren go to Heaven before him,
 and Mr. *Shower* among the rest, in a very
 affectionate Letter, informs me that the first
 Sermon Mr. *Shower* preached, was in the Meet-
 ing

ing-House of Mr. *Thomas Vincent* in *Hand-Ally*, that it was in the Year 1677, and from that Text, *Psal. cxix. 30. I have chosen the Way of Truth.* Mr. *Rogers* took Notes of this Sermon, which he has still by him.

I HAVE seen the very Sermon under Mr. *Shower's* own Hand, but it is such a Mixture of Long Hand and Characters, that it is very difficult to give a just Account of it; this however is very plain,

THAT he designed hereby to declare the solemn Choice that he had made of Divine Truth, as the Way in which, by the Grace of God, he resolved to walk through this World.

THAT he chose the Way of Truth, not only as to his general Conversation, but in the Course of his intended Ministry.

THAT by the Way of Truth, he meant the Way which God has prescribed in the Scriptures of Truth, both for Religious Worship, Faith and Practice, in Opposition to all false and erroneous Ways, which have so many and such Multitudes walk in them.

AND that he did not only consider the Way of Truth, as that by which the Christian Religion in general is distinguished from Paganism and Mahometanism,

BUT the Way of Reformed Christianity, as distinguished from all the Antichristian Errors and Mixtures of Popery.

AND as he has explained him more fully in Discourse with his Friends and Brethren

upon this his first Sermon, he had respect to that further degree of Reformation, which the good old Puritans and the Ejected Ministers so earnestly pleaded and suffered for, and which he believed was necessary; and that tho' this Way of Nonconformity could not recommend it self by such secular Honours and Advantages as the Way of the National Establishment, yet it was a sufficient Reason to determine him for it, that he thought it a Way that came nearer to the Scripture, the great Rule and Standard of Truth.

I THE rather mention this, because there have been Reports frequently raised both formerly and of late Years, as if Mr. Shower was well satisfied to conform, and sometimes it was given out that he had actually done it; of these Reports he took Notice to some of his Brethren not many Years before he died, and assured them he had been long fixed in his Choice of Nonconformity, and referred to this his first Sermon, in which he said he had an Eye upon that Part of Divine Truth, which the Nonconforming Ministers had pleaded and suffered for, which though he did not think to be of equal Importance with the great Essential Truths of the Christian Religion, nor with those which distinguish Protestants from Papists, yet he believed it to be Divine Truth, and of too great Importance to be given up for the pleasing of Men, or for the sake of any worldly Advantages whatsoever.

THUS

THUS Mr. *Shower* set out as a Candidate for the Ministry, and he soon began to be taken Notice of and very much followed; he had lively Affections, a grave and serious Behaviour, great Freedom of Expression, and chose the most awful and affecting Subjects; it was impossible for him to lie concealed in this great City, where there were very many of the best Rank that adhered to the Dissenting Way in that Time of Restraint, and some of them with much more Affection and Zeal than they have since discovered in a long Time of Liberty.

IN the Year 1678, a Year memorable for the Discovery of the Popish Plot, the Body of Protestants in *England* being justly alarm'd with the Danger their Civil and Religious Liberties were expos'd to, laid aside their Animosities against one another, and heartily joyn'd against the Common Enemy. The Dissenters had the Right done them to be owned true Friends to their Country, and there appeared a good Disposition to take off the Hardships they had laboured under; however their Assemblies began to be more Publick and more Numerous, and the wisest and best of the Established Church owned, (as they have done more than once on such Occasions) that the Severities they had met with were owing to a Popish Faction, whose Stratagem was to attack the Protestant Interest on that Side, where it was least supported by Human Strength, that having made a Breach there,

C

they

they might the more effectually carry the Whole.

AT this Time it was that an Evening-Lecture was set up in a large Room belonging to a Coffee-House in *Exchange-Ally*; it was supported and attended by some of the most considerable Merchants in *London*; 'several of them (says my Author) have since that Time filled the most eminent Posts of the City of *London*.

THE Ministers chosen to preach this Lecture, were Mr. *John Shower*, Mr. *Lambert*, Mr. *Dorrington*, and Mr. *Thomas Goodwin*; Mr. *Lambert* was some Time after chosen Pastor to the Congregation in *Southwark*, belonging to that very holy excellent Minister, Mr. *Wadsworth*. Mr. *Dorrington* thought fit to leave the Dissenters and go over to the Church; and I am sorry to say, not being satisfied to have acted according to his own Judgment, he pursued his former Friends and Acquaintance with a Bitterness of Temper which they never deserved at his Hands; Mr. *Thomas Goodwin*, a Person of great and universal Literature, and of a most genteel obliging Temper, removed to *Pinnor*, where he kept a private Academy, and lived handsomly and usefully upon his Estate for many Years.

THESE FOUR are all dead, Mr. *Shower* outlived all the rest; their Preaching in the Lecture I have mentioned was very acceptable, the Novelty of the Thing brought many Hearers, and the good Performances of the
Lecturers

Lecturers gave a Reputation to it, and God was pleased to give it the Sanction of his gracious Presence and Blessing; many yet alive remember it, and speak of it with Pleasure, how lively and zealous those young Ministers were in their Work, how serious and attentive the Hearers, and how much Good was done to young People especially; and in this good Work none will think I shew Disrespect to the rest of the Ministers, when I say that Mr. *Shower* was in some superior degree Acceptable and Useful.

THE Accounts I have from different Persons, relating to this Part of Mr. *Shower's* Life, do not all exactly agree in Point of Time; by the best Conjectures I can make in collating them, I suppose it was about this Time that Mr. *Shower*, besides his Turn at the Evening-Lecture, was Assistant to the Learned and most Ingenious Mr. *Vincent Alsop*, and continued with him for some considerable Time, by which he had the Opportunity of making himself known at the Court-end of the Town; his good Sense and genteel Temper and Manner, and his modest and discreet Behaviour, then recommended him to some Persons of very good Quality.

THIS is certain, in the Year 1679, he was ordained; I suppose his Ordination was private, for about this Time the Popish Interest at Court had recovered some Strength, and was struggling to turn the Odium of the Plot upon the best Protestants in the Kingdom. The

Certificate given by those that ordained Mr. Shower, is drawn up in those cautious and general Terms, as make me conclude they were under some Apprehension of Danger.; it runs thus:

THESE are to certify whom it may Concern, that Mr. John Shower of London was Ordained Minister of the Gospel in our Presence, and in Testimony of it we subscribe our Names this 24th of December, 1679.

RICHARD ADAMS,
M. SYLVESTER,
S. SMITH,
RICHARD STRETTON,
O. HUGHES.

WHEN he had spent two or three Years more in his Ministerial Work in *London* and *Westminster*, he was desired by that eminent Patriot, Sir *Samuel Barnardiston*, to be the Companion of his Nephew, the late Sir *Samuel*, in his intended Travels; this he was the more inclined to accept of, because the Temper of the Court and Church was not now so favourable to those of his Perswasion, and his great Honour and Esteem for that worthy Family, determin'd him to comply with what was so much desired by them.

I HAVE obtained the Favour from a very worthy Gentleman, and true Friend to Mr. Shower, who was for some part of the Time
his

his Companion Abroad to draw up some Account of his Travels; and am glad that I shall be able to gratify the more curious Reader with the following Narrative.

THE Reverend Mr. *John Shower*, partly to satisfy a worthy Curiosity in gaining a more extensive View of the World by visiting foreign Countries, and partly to comply with the Relations of the late Sir *Samuel*, then Mr. *Barnardiston*, who earnestly intreated him to be a Companion, Assistant, and Adviser to that Gentleman, determined to enter upon his Travels.

IN pursuance of this Scheme, he went from London in or about the Year 1683, in Company with Mr. *Barnardiston* before-mentioned, Mr. *Cornish*, Mr. *Thomas Goodwin*, Son of Dr. *Thomas Goodwin*, embark'd for *France*, and soon after safely arriv'd at *Paris*. And after Mr. *Shower* had made his Observation on all Things remarkable and entertaining to Strangers in that populous and magnificent City, and had seen the Palace, the beautiful Gardens, the curious Water-Works and Canal at *Versailles*, he and his Friends, Mr. *Cornish* excepted, continued their Journey to *Lyons*, a fair City seated on the confluence of the *Soane* and the *Rhone*, and the Center of Commerce on that side of *France*. He staid not long in this pleasant Place but proceeded to *Geneva*, with Intention to reside there, till the Heats of the Summer were past, and the Rains began

to fall in *Italy*, which they commonly do about the beginning of *September*, and then his Resolution was to visit that delightful Country.

BEING arriv'd at *Geneva*, and designing to spend the rest of the Summer in that temperate Climate among a People very acceptable to him, he took Lodgings, and with great Application to his Studies at home, and Observations abroad, he improv'd his Knowledge as a Divine, his Virtues as a Christian, and his Manners as a Gentleman. So fine and amiable were his Humanity, Condescension and Benevolence, so easy and courteous was his Behaviour, and so agreeable his Deemeanour in making and receiving Addresses, that he gain'd the Love and Esteem of all, with whom he convers'd; particularly he was much valued by the Pastors of the Churches in that City, among whom was Mr. *Turretine*, one famous for the Eloquence of the Pulpit and his Theological Writings.

It was here that he met with Mr. *Richard*, now Sir *Richard Blackmore*, who arriv'd at this City in the latter End of the Spring, 1683. He came in Company with Mr. *George Smith*, a Gentleman of *Nibly* in *Gloucestershire*, since deceas'd, from the Province of *Languedoc* in *France*, where he had spent the Winter, in the same View of continuing in this City, till the Air of *Italy* should become moderate enough to encourage their Journey to that Country. Mr. *Shower* and this Gentleman soon contracted an Acquaintance, and afterwards

wards an intimate Friendship, to their mutual Satisfaction and Advantage, which continu'd without Interruption, Diffidence or Diminution, as long as the first liv'd. They pass'd the Summer with Delight and Improvement at *Geneva*; a Season so hot in *Italy*, that the Air is not only suffocating by reason of the scorching Sun, but likewise so unwholesome and dangerous, that no Traveller can sleep within Thirty Miles of *Rome*, without great Hazard of being seiz'd with a malignant and fatal Fever: The Reason of which, as they were inform'd, is, that the Country which in that Compass about *Rome* is so dispeopled, that Hands are wanting to cultivate the Land, to turn up and till the Fields, lying neglected and unlabour'd, as well as undrain'd of stagnant and corrupted Waters, engender putrifaactive Ferments and the Seeds of Pestilential Diseases. But in *September* following, when the Autumnal Rains use to cool and mitigate the immoderate Heat of that Region, Mr. Shower and his Friends prepared to pass the *Alpes*, and make their Way to *Turin*.

IN the beginning of *September* they set forth from *Geneva*, and took the Road to *Chambery*, the Capital City of *Savoy*; thence they pursu'd their Journey by the most practicable Way, that of *Mount Seni*, to the Vale of *Piedmont*, and soon arriv'd at *Turin*. Nor did they stay long in that agreeable and and polite Place, but finding empty Calashes of Return, that had brought Passengers to

this Town from *Rome*, they laid hold on this Convenience, and went forward to *Florence* by the Road that leads to *Milan*, *Cremona*, *Piacenza*, *Parma*, and *Bologna*; being come to *Florence* they quitted their Voiturins, and having made some Stay to see what was most Remarkable in this beautiful and stately City, and the various Curiosities, especially the admirable Pictures and Statues in the Court of the Great Duke, they went by the Way of *Fisa*, and the pleasant Vale of *Pistoia* to *Leghorn*, intending to embark there for *Naples*, if they should find any *English* Vessel bound thither, that by this Means they might save the Trouble and Expence of a long Journey by Land. According to their Wishes there lay in the Road an *English* Vessel call'd the *Scipio*, Captain *Dare* Commander, designing to put to Sea in a few Days for *Naples*. They agreed with the Captain for their Passage, and waited till he was ready to sail. Mr. *Shower*, during his Stay at *Leghorn*, by his obliging Demeanour and agreeable Conversation, made himself very acceptable to the *English* Factory in that Port, who received him and his Companions with all Marks of Respect and Civility, one of whom, Mr. *Ball*, a worthy Merchant, is still living at *Kensington*. A Fortnight being gone, they embark'd on Board Captain *Dare's* Ship, and by a favourable Wind soon landed at *Naples*, where the *English* Consul and Merchants entertain'd them with great Expressions of Kindness and Esteem. Mr.

Mr. SHOWER and his Friends were much delighted with the Curiosities particular to this Place, namely the *Grott Lucullus*, which is a Road of considerable Length, cut with immense Labour through the bottom of a high Hill, at a little distance from the Town, for a shorter and more easie reciprocal Passage ; and the pleasant Hill *Pauselippo*, covered with Trees of various kinds, and famous for the Tomb of *Virgil*, who, as Tradition reports, was buried there. Mr. Shower and his Friends were pleas'd with the extensive and charming Prospect which this Eminence affords. Turning their Faces to the South, they saw with pleasure the Bay of *Naples* spread beneath, and Ships under Sail making to the Port, or coming from it ; beyond the Bay rises high in the Air Mount *Vesuvius*, vomiting from its hollow Peak Clouds of Smoak and Cynders ; on the Right-Hand they view'd the Isles of *Ischa* and *Caprea*, on the Left the beautiful City of *Naples*, stretching along the Shoar towards this Place ; they were inform'd that the Gentlemen and Ladies, during the hottest Seasons, constantly in their Pleasure-Boats pass hither from the City in the Evening to breathe the refreshing Air, as those of *London* spend the Evenings in the Ring of *Hide-Park*.

Mr. SHOWER was no less pleas'd to visit the Antiquities of *Baia* near this Place, particularly the Vapour-Baths of the ancient *Romans*, and the Fish-Ponds of *Julius Caesar*. In another Place, he was surpriz'd with the sight of

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Zolphotara, famous for its Stores of Brimstone, where, as he was amaz'd to observe, that when he trod on the level Ground that was bare of Grass, it shook under his Feet at every Step, and if pierc'd with the Point of his Sword, that it let forth Smoak and hot Vapours ; so he view'd with Admiration the hot and yellow Mouths of the *Vulcanos*, that glow'd in the sides of the rising Ground which encompasses the Place. He was inform'd, that frequent Bellowings under Ground, heaving Earthquakes, and terrible Eruptions of melted Minerals happened here ; and that not many Years before so vast a heap was raised, carried thro' the Air, and set down at about a Miles distance, that it form'd a new Hill, now called *Montagna Nuova*. Mr. Shower, accompany'd by his Fellow-Travellers, was so curious and hardy as to visit the Top of the famous burning Hill *Vesuvius*, whose Head is a tow'ring Heap of Cynders, difficult to ascend. Approaching near the wide and smoaking Mouth, to gratify his Curiosity, he trod on Cakes of Sulphur, unform'd Oar, and hot Cynders, and heard a terrible Noise issuing from the Bowels of the hollow Mountain. From this Scene of Horror he was reliev'd by another of as great Pleasure, when looking Eastwards, he had a diffusive view of *Cumpania Felix*, the Garden of *Italy*, and beheld a wide and fruitful Plain covered with beautiful Cities.

AFTER about fourteen Days he left this Place, and took the direct way to *Rome*. Here
Mr.

Mr. *Shower* behaved himself with great Decency and Prudence, by declining all Debates with the Papists, that might have embroil'd him in Difficulties, and by taking care not to affront the Religion of *Rome*, with Derision and Contempt, or by any Publick Action which might have moved their Resentment ; and therefore he avoided being present at their Masses, and meeting their solemn Processions, to which he could not pay the Veneration which they expected. In the mean time he improved his Hours, and made his Travels beneficial, by informing himself of the Customs, Manners and Disposition of the Inhabitants, as well as of the Constitution of that Ecclesiastical Monarchy, and the Polity of their wise and celebrated Court ; at other times he contemplated with Pleasure and Improvement the numerous instructive Antiquities of the Place, as well under Ground as above ; and at other times entertain'd himself with viewing the stately Palaces of the Cardinals and Princes, richly furnish'd, and profusely adorn'd with Pictures and ancient Statues, by the most celebrated Masters ; and sometimes he amus'd himself with viewing their stately Domes and beautiful Temples, particularly the famous Church of *St. Peter*, rich and magnificent with Painting, Gold and Marble, as well as admirable for their Architecture. He took great delight amidst these exquisite Curiosities, and intended, as his Friends did, to pass the Winter in this City. Accordingly they continued here

here till the Carnival, which was very entertaining, tho' not so splendid as that at *Venice*; he and his Company, among other Diversions, were invited and admitted *Gratis* to the Operas and other Dramatick Performances in the Palace, and at the Expence of Prince *Colonna*, where the Instrumental and Vocal Musick were superiour to any that he had heard before. He had indeed soon discern'd, that the *Italian* Masters had a more delicate and exquisite Taste of Musick, as well as of Painting, Sculpture and Building, than their Neighbour Nations, but he never was so charm'd with it as when he went to the Diversions at that Prince's House; and it must be acknowledg'd he was convinc'd, that, to the dishonour of this civiliz'd Protestant Country, the Performances of the Stage in *Italy*, as well as *France*, appeared cleaner and less shocking to modest Ears than those of *Great-Britain*.

WHILE he resided at *Rome*, Mr. Shower was very diligent in informing himself about their Doctrines and Worship; and when he reflected on the immense Treasure, costly Ornaments, and pompous Decorations of their Churches, on the Ecclesiastical Robes of State, and Princely Vestments of the Priests, on their ludicrous Forms of Devotion, especially on the Festivals of their Saints, and at *Christmas*, when some sacred Story or other is represented by waxen Figures on a Theater, accompany'd with fine Musick, that look'd like a Dramatick Entertainment or a Spiritual Diversion,

version, when, I say, he saw every where an Affectation of Splendour in external Rites and gaudy Worship, he with Reason concluded, That the Simplicity and inward Spirit of Christ's Religion was turn'd into an empty Show and shining Illusion; and he could not but think, that Ceremony with them was become the Substance of Sacred Things, and Piety and Purity of Heart chang'd to a Mechanical Devotion of the Body. He did not see that this Face of Religion look'd with the Air of the Apostle St. *Peter* or his Companions: And when he contemplated their Adoration of Images, their Worship paid to Saints, and their numerous real or pretended Reliques, of which sacred Trinkets and venerable Trifles they have an immense Collection; he could not but reflect with Wonder and Compassion on so general a Delusion of the People, and the sad Fruits of an ambitious and designing Clergy; the more he entertain'd these Reflections, the more he was confirm'd in his own Religion, and convinc'd of the unreasonable and absurd Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*.

NEITHER he, nor any of his Fellow-Travel-
lers, had the Curiosity to kiss the Pope's
Slipper; on the contrary they declined it, as
taking it to be too great an Honour to be paid
to the Pontiff, as a Bishop, or a Temporal
Prince, tho' he who then wore the Triple
Crown was very Popular, and well-spoken
of by those of the Reform'd Religion; his
Name

Name was *Odiscalchi*, called by some the *Protestant Pope*, because he was a hearty Friend to the *Austrian* Interest, and opposed the Encroachments and exorbitant Power of *France*.

Mr. *SHOWER* and his Friends designed to stay in *Rome* till *Lent* was past, and then to Travel by Land to *Venice*, but those Measures were broken by an unforeseen Incident that happening about this Time, obliged them to leave this City sooner than they intended. The Incident was this ; at this Season of the Year, according to an Anniversary Custom, the King of *Spain* presents by his Ambassador a fine *Hackny* or *Gennet* (by those Names they call the Horse to be presented) to the Pope, as an Homage due from him to the Church, or an Acknowledgment of his dependent Tenure of the Kingdom of *Naples*: This Solemnity is always perform'd with Splendor and Magnificence, and therefore all Strangers are curious to see the Ceremony. Mr. *Shower* and his Friends, who had been always cautious to avoid Occasions that might tempt or compel them to kneel at the Mass, enquired diligently whether there would be any Consecration of the Host that Day, when the Horse should be introduc'd into the Pope's Chappel ; for so it was to be at that Time, the Pontiff being indispos'd, and not able or willing to receive this Homage in *St. Peter's Church* ; all Persons inform'd them, that there would be no such Thing ; For, said they, *it will be Noon before the Ceremony begins, and no Consecration can*

be performed at that time of the Day. Our Travellers therefore satisfied with this Account, after they had seen the Pomp of the Cavalcade pass by, went by a private way to the Chapel, and crowded forward to the Rails that inclos'd the Place before the Altar, where the Pope sat on his Throne, and the Cardinals on their Benches. Soon after the Procession, at least as many as could, enter'd the Chappel with the *Gennet* richly adorn'd, and when some Parts of the Devotion were perform'd, the Pope rose from his Throne, and supported by the *Spanish* Ambassador on the one Hand, and that of *France* on the other, he went and kneeled before the Altar, when presently the Host was elevated, and all Persons called upon by the Pope's Guards that attended, to pay their Adoration, which they did, except one of the *English* Travellers, who was so determin'd and resolute, that he refus'd to kneel, as looking on that Compliance to be interpretative Idolatry; a little after the Cup was likewise elevated, which it seems had been consecrated, as well as the Bread, early the same Morning; and a second time the same Gentleman persisted in his Obstinacy, and continued in a standing Posture, not without apprehension, that he should have been seiz'd and ill-us'd by the arm'd Officers. This Action, Mr. Shower's Friends concluded must have given great Offence, and could not but be attended with bad Consequences, which Opinion was confirmed the next Day, when a noble
English

English Lord, then residing at *Rome*, made them a Visit, and assured them, that the Behaviour before-mentioned was spoken of among Persons of Distinction with great Resentment, and advis'd his Countryman that had shewn so much Courage, and as he thought so little Prudence, to quit the Place for his Safety. Upon this Consideration, the Person that had given the publick Offence resolv'd to leave *Rome*, and the rest, not willing to divide Company, determin'd to go likewise.

THEY forthwith put their Design in execution, and travell'd by Land to *Loretto*, where they saw with Admiration the immense Riches of the Place, and the holy Piece of old Wall, that the credulous People are made to believe, was brought through the Air by two Carrier Angels, and set down at this Place, where now it is enshrin'd, and worshipp'd with great Devotion. They could not but with great surprize behold the inestimable Presents heap'd upon the Lady of *Loretto*, by the superstitious Devotion of deluded Princes, and People of Quality and Fortune. Mr. *Shower* and his Company went from this celebrated Church to *Ancona*, and intended to go by Land to *Venice*, but examining what Money they were furnish'd withal, they found, that by their hasty departure from *Rome*, they had forgotten to take up so much upon their Bills of Credit, as would defray their Charges by Land to *Venice*. This oblig'd them to change their Resolution, and determin'd them

to go by Sea, as the shorter and less expensive Way. Upon which they agreed with the Master of a large, but open Boat, to carry them to *Venice*.

THEIR Design was to pass from *Ancona, Terra à Terra*, that is, to keep within Sight of the Shoar, and to lodge each Night at some convenient Town on the Coast. They embark'd one afternoon, and intended to sail near the Land till the next day. But at Night when the Passengers went to Rest, the Master and his Crew fell so fast asleep, that they waken'd not till the next Morning, and then looking out they found themselves carry'd to Sea out of sight of all Land. It was with Concern and some Consternation that the Travellers saw themselves in an open Vessel amidst the Waves of the Gulph of *Venice*; and could not but apprehend, that if a fresh Gale should spring up from the Shoar, they must be expos'd to great Hazard in the turbulent *Adriatique* Sea, or if they escap'd this that they should be in equal Danger of falling into the Hands of *Dalmatian* Pyrates. In this Affright they gave Orders to the Boatmen to steer such a Course as they judg'd most likely to bring them again within Prospect of the *Italian* Shoar; and they directed right, for after some Hours they began to discover Land, whither they made with great Diligence.

It was with great Satisfaction, that they found themselves extricated from this Difficulty, and Mr. *Shower* particularly express'd his Thanks

to Divine Providence for the Diliverance. From this time they pass'd safe by the Shoar's side till they came to *Venice*. Here Mr. Shower was extreamly pleas'd not only with the particular Situation of the Town upon many small Islands clustring in the Sea, by which it is secur'd from any Attack by Land, but likewise with the stately Domes, magnificent Palaces, Boats of Pleasure and innumerable Gundalos, in which the Inhabitants pass constantly up and down their Streets of Water. When he had view'd the August Senate-House adorn'd with admirable Paintings by the best ancient Masters, the celebrated Church of *St. Mark*, the Bridge call'd the *Rialto*, a surprizing Peice of Architecture consisting but of one extensive Arch, the Port, the Arsenal and other Curjosities, especially the great Variety of Pictures by *Tinctoret*, *Titian*, *Paul Veronese*, *Corregio*, and other great Hands, he left this famous City, and with his Fellow-Travellers went to *Padua*. In this University he staid about a Month. Mr. Shower was a great Lover of Learning and a curious Collector of Valuable Authors; and by great Diligence in the Towns, thro' which he pass'd, frequented and search'd the Booksellers Shops, and purchas'd the Writers that he chiefly esteem'd: But this Place most favour'd his Design of laying the Foundation of a Library; for the University of *Padua*, being a Mart of Arts and Sciences, was well stor'd with all sorts of Authors ancient and Modern, as well *Greek* as *Latin*, the first of which are scarce in other

Italian

Italian Towns, as they are in *Spain* and *Portugal*. After Mr. Shower had well inform'd himself of the Customs and Manners of this University of such ancient Reputation, and had satisfy'd himself by the Conversation of the Learned Professors, he with his Friends determined to go thro' the *Venetian* Territories, and the Country of the *Grisons*, into *Germany*, and thence down the *Rhine* to *Amsterdam*.

IN or about *April*, 1684, they went from *Padua* and enter'd upon their Journey, intending to visit *Verona*, *Vicenza* and *Brescia*, in their Way to *Bergamo*. It was in one of these Towns that Mr. *Bernardiston*, who was a virtuous Gentleman, but naturally subject to some Uneasiness of Temper, which was much improved by a great degree of the Spleen, and a Valetudinary Constitution, took a Fancy that he was very ill, and incapable of proceeding in the Journey, which was not the first Time he had entertain'd such Imaginations. Mr. Shower, who was a prudent Adviser and a faithful Friend to this Gentleman, being well acquainted with his Humour, by his wise Management and a skilful Address, sometimes by accommodating himself to his Fancies, and sometimes by Reasoning and earnest Perswasions, often set him right, and reduc'd him to a better Temper: But he scarce ever had a harder Task than to remove the melancholy Fit that seiz'd his Friend in this Place; but at last, by long Application, good Arguments, and importunate Entreaties, he prevail'd with him to shake off his Indolence and

distrust of his Ability to Travel; which accomplish'd, they pursued their Journey to *Bergamo*, and being arriv'd at that City, which is seated at the Foot of those *Alps*, over which a difficult and almost impracticable Road leads to *Coire*, the Capital City of the *Grisons*, a Message was sent to the Hill, to fetch down Oxen and Sledges for six Persons, which are constantly kept there, to a sufficient Number, at the Expence of the Government of *Venice*, and employ'd *Gratis* to draw Passengers up the Mountain, by which a Communication may be kept open between their Territories and the Country of the *Grisons*, by encouraging Travellers to pass that Way; for the Road up the Hill being extraordinary narrow, and cover'd deep with Snow, Horses are not able, or rather not cool and quiet enough, to pass along, which Oxen by more Strength and Patience can, tho' slowly, yet effectually perform.

THEY set forth early in the Morning each on his Sledge with a Yoke of Oxen: When they had ascended the Hill, not a little terrify'd with the deep Precipices that lay near their narrow Path, thro' which they pass'd, they discover'd nothing but spreading Snows, whose immense and unexhausted Stores continue undissolv'd thro' all Ages. The Sun shone exceeding bright, and the Hill is rais'd so high, that no Rain ever falls upon its Head: No Cloud or Mists darken'd the Air, and nothing was to be seen but blue Skies and white Lands. The dazzling glances of the Sun-beams from the pure Snows were

were so sharp and painful, that one of the Company of weaker Eyes than the rest complain'd that the Suffering was too great to be endur'd, and was apprehensive that it would have been fatal to him. Mr. *Shower* and his Company pass'd over this Plain of about two Miles extent on Foot, and afterward descending the Hill, they saw in the Air below them a hovering Fog, so it appear'd, but when they came down into it they found it to be a plentiful Shower of Rain, which in the Region whence they came, as I have said, never falls, so that during some Hours they had been above the watry Clouds. After they had pass'd this Mountain they lodg'd in a little Vale between the Peaks of the Hills, where they were alarm'd in the Night by the fall of a vast Fragment of a Rock, an Incident not uncommon in that Place; and the next Day they pursu'd their Way by another of as difficult and sharp an Ascent as the former, one of these they call *Mount Splug*, and the other *St. Mark*.

THE Passage over these *Alps* was accompany'd with great Labour, and not a little Terror, by reason of the steep and rocky Hills which the Travellers ascended, thro' a narrow winding Way, near deep and frightful Precipices. This Journey, however, was more desirable and entertaining to Mr. *Shower* and his Friends than the sight of the most magnificent City in *Italy*. They were here amus'd and surpriz'd with a curious Observation of Nature's Wonders; a great Variety of towring

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Peaks,

Peaks, and profound Cavities, hanging abrupt Rocks, and a constant and uniform Sound of immense Falls of Waters, and the Noise of interrupted Torrents rushing down the Sides of the Hills in rude and unfashion'd Channels; in short, innumerable Scenes of Terror and Desolation conspir'd to form a perfect Wilderness. But that which entertain'd them most, was the Contemplation of the Origin of Rivers, which at the bottom of the Hills are made by the confluent Streams of Water, that from the melting Treasures of Snow on the Top, descend in various Rills or Torrents, which are collected and joyn'd in the Vallies beneath. From the East Side of these high Mountains arise the *Danube* and the *Rhine*, and from the opposite the *Rhone*, which, besides many other of less Note, owe their Origin to the Snow Water that rushes down in distinct Currents, which joyn below and are continually recruited with fresh Stores: And because the Snows dissolve in greater plenty by intense Heat, these Rivers are in Summer full, and often overflow their Banks, while in Winter they are narrow, and near to the Hills almost dry, their Channels being defrauded of their Supplies by melting Snows.

HAVING pass'd these *Alps*, Mr. *Shower* and his Fellow Travellers arriv'd at *Morbegno*, a fair Town seated at the Foot of the Hills in the *Valteline*, which is the first considerable Valley that opens itself on this side the Mountains. It is long and narrow and wall'd on each

each side with Hills of great height, by the Washings of which the Soil is enrich'd and becomes very fruitful. This Country is subject to the *Grisons*, and govern'd by a *Podestà* or civil Magistrate appointed by their Authority. Hence he went to *Choire*, the capital City of that Commonwealth, and thence he pass'd thro' some Parts of *Switzerland* into *Germany*, and embark'd on the *Rhine* for *Stratsburg*.

THAT River in this Place, which is so near its Source, runs down with great Rapidity, and without the help of Sails or Oars, the Boat advanc'd with surprizing Swiftness. After they had stay'd long enough at *Stratsburg* to satisfy the Curiosity of Travellers, that they might pass down the *Rhine* to *Amsterdam* at leisure, and make what stay they pleas'd at the great Towns by the Way, they resolv'd not to go in the common Passage-Boat, but to buy One to themselves; which Project was soon put in Execution. That done, they endeavour'd to hire some Native of the Town accustomed to the Stream, that might sit in the Vessel and guide them down the *Rhine* to *Manheim* in the *Lower Palatinate*; but the Price demanded was so exorbitant, and to amazement unreasonable, that Mr. Shower and his Friends resolv'd they would embark without a Guide hir'd at *Stratsburg*, and take one, as they believ'd they might, for a more moderate Reward at the next Town or Village they should see on either Side of the River. In these Views they one Day departed near

Noon from *Stratsburg*, being about six Gentlemen and three Servants, of whom a sufficient Number were able to Row, of which however there was little Occasion, the *Rhine* at that place running with a swift Stream; but to their great Admiration and Disappointment, Mr. *Shower* and his Friends could not discover one Town or Village on either Side the River, but were oblig'd in the Evening, not thinking it safe to advance farther without a Guide, to fix their Boat and wait the return of Day.

EARLY in the Morning Mr. *Shower* and his Company proceeded on their Voyage, but they had not pass'd far, before they saw the River divide itself into two Branches of equal breadth, which ran different Ways. Here they were much perplex'd, and not being vers'd in the Passage, they were at a great loss which Stream to pursue. It happen'd that they guess'd right, and came again into the Channel, where the Streams were reunited: A second Time the Tide was split, and then too they succeeded in their Conjecture; but at the third Time they unhappily mistook, and chose the wrong Current. Being caught in this Error, they advanc'd not far before they perceiv'd the Stream run with great swiftneſs down a rocky declivity amidst a Wood, where they expected often to perish by the Bodies and great Limbs of Trees, that interrupted the swimming of the Boat, which therefore at every Turn was ready to overſet. After they had pass'd the Wood in this Fright, they came
into

into a wider Water, and the River flow'd with less Rapidity: And now the Travellers seem'd to be deliver'd from their Fears, and began to be at ease, as thinking the bitterness of Death was over, when presently they descri'd a Stone Bridge over the River with three or four Arches, and as they approach'd nearer, they were convinc'd that their greatest Danger was yet to come; for they manifestly discern'd that the Tilt of the Boat, which was built of Deals, had a Roof too high for the Arches, where, by reason of a full Current, the Space was too little to suffer the Boat to pass thro', and by Consequence that it must be certainly stav'd if they were oblig'd to go on to the Bridge: Upon this they resolv'd, if possible, to row to the Shoar to avoid that imminent Danger; twice they us'd their utmost Efforts to gain their Point, but without Success, being unable to cross the Stream, which ran with such Force, that it carry'd off the Boat from Land, notwithstanding all that the Voyagers could do with their Oars to prevent it.

By this time they came near the Bridge, and all look'd upon themselves as lost, when they discovered a Gap between two Trees on the Banks, where they might thrust in their Boat, if they could row it up to the Side; and this being the only Refuge left to save them from immediate Drowning, they resolv'd once more to exert their whole Strength to reach the Shoar in this place. While this was doing, and the Rowers strain'd themselves for
their

their Lives; one of the Company stood upon the Keel of the Boat resolving to leap out into the River, if he found the Rowers were unable to prevail: They strove with their utmost Vigour to gain the Land, but the Tide again prov'd too strong for them, and the Boat began to fall back; at which Minute the Person that stood at the Keel finding the Vessel give ground, leap'd with his greatest Force towards the Bank, and at the same time cast the Rope of the Boat into the River before him; having done this, he found himself upon Ground, and not above the Waste in Water, and immediately catching up the Rope of the Boat drew it, by the help of the Trees, with the Company safe to Land.

As the Travellers were before under the Apprehensions of imminent and unavoidable Death, excepting one, who was a good Swimmer, their Joy at their unexpected Escape bore proportion to their Danger. They all express'd their Gratitude to the Divine Being for their great Deliverance; but none more than Mr. *Shower*, who upon this Occasion acknowledg'd his Thankfulness for so Gracious a Dispensation of Providence, in that pious and Christian Manner which became his Character. The Company immediately sent for a Carpenter to a small Village adjoyning, which was in the Country of *Baden*, to take down the Tilt or Covering of Deals, which were found to be near a foot higher than the Roof of the Arch was from the surface of the Water.

After

After the Tilt was shorten'd, and made capable of passing thro' the Arch of the Bridge, they hir'd a Guide to conduct them to *Manheim*, resolving no more to run so great a Hazard as before they had done. From *Manheim* they pass'd down the *Rhine*, and visited all the great Towns seated on the Banks of that River, till they came about *June* or *July* to *Amsterdam*; here the Company parted, the greatest Number embarking for *England*, while Mr. Shower stay'd in *Holland* about two Years longer.

HERE the Narrative ends, which Mr. Shower's worthy Friend has obliged me with.

I AM told by one that was long and intimately acquainted with Mr. Shower, that after he had been thus visiting the Neighbouring Nations and Churches for almost two Years, he returned again into *England*, and was gladly readmitted to his Turn at the Lecture in *Exchange-Ally*; and presently made it to appear, that he had not (as too many) purchased his Improvements in Human Knowledge and polite Address, at the dear Expence and Loss of a tender Conscience and serious Spirit, but seemed more rais'd above the World, the more he had seen of it.

BEFORE he undertook the great and long Journey, he had chosen to preach a Farewel-Sermon of Resignation, which was afterwards printed, from 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. *If I shall find favour in the Eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and*

and shew me both his Ark and his Habitation. But if he say thus, I have no Delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good to him. And when he was safely returned, his first Sermon in that Evening Lecture was upon the Vanity of the World, from that Text, *Eccles. i. 8. All Things are full of Labour, Man cannot utter it; the Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing.* Persons may please themselves before-hand with Hopes of being greatly satisfied when they have seen Foreign Courts and Cities, but they find themselves disappointed; *all Things are full of Labour*, the Mind feels some Disatisfaction, not because it would see more, but because it has seen so much, and met with so little worth the Time and Cost.

SOME of Mr. Shower's Friends have had a general Account, that while he was in France he had the Opportunity of discoursing with some of the *Romish* Clergy about the Points in Difference, which was managed with so much Discretion, Judgment, and good Manners on his Part, as gained him Applause even from his Adversaries, and was very much to the Satisfaction of his Friends; but the particular Place and Circumstances of this Conference, I have not been able to get an Account of, tho' I have much desired it.

MANY remember, that he would often speak of his going to hear Sermons of the most celebrated Preachers among the Papists, and he observed some of them had a strange Way of work-

working up the Passions of the Hearers, especially in their Discourses upon the Sufferings of Christ; and that they might do it the more effectually, they would, in the midst of a very florid Harangue, address themselves to Christ by way of a familiar Dialogue, and take a small Crucifix into their Hands, and direct their Discourse to it, as to Christ himself, and that with all the Charms of pathetic Eloquence and Action, till the Imaginations of the People were all put into a Flame, and the whole Audience, by a kind of Mechanism dissolved in Tears; and none more so, than those who at other Times were the most vain and dissolute of them all.

IN mentioning this, Mr. *Shower* would take Occasion to lament the want of suitable Affections to the blessed Redeemer in those to whom he is represented in the Glass of the Gospel; what pity it is, that the proper rational spiritual Means of God's own Institution should not work more powerfully upon the Faith of Protestants, than these vain and superstitious Inventions of Men do upon the Fancies of the poor deluded Papists.

Mr. SHOWER and his Companions happened to be in *France* at that Time when the *French* King began to break through the Edict of *Nantz*, and other his most solemn Engagements to his Protestant Subjects; those flourishing Churches were then declining apace, most unjust Incroachments were gradually made upon them, and it was manifest to them all a violent

lent Storm was coming. The Ministers of the famous Church of *Charenton* thought it their Duty to stir up themselves and their People to prepare to meet their God, and in the Way of his Judgments to wait on him; they kept many solemn Days of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer, and those Days were spent in a very extraordinary Manner; they met early in the Morning, and continued till Night, the Numbers that attended were vastly great, and both Ministers and People were under a very uncommon Impression of godly Sorrow and Fear; on one of these Occasions when Mr. *Shower* was present, towards the Close of the Day, an eminent Minister came up into the Pulpit, and in an affectionate Discourse set before them the Danger the Ark of God was in among them, and in very lively manner described the Excellency of that pure and undefiled Religion which they professed and had so long enjoyed, and the dreadful Loss they should sustain, if their Church should be left desolate, and the daily Oblation cease; the Minister's Heart was so full, that he could proceed no further, there were Floods of Tears shed throughout the great Assembly, and an universal Outcry; after a considerable Pause, the Minister reassumed the awful Subject, but was again interrupted by excess of Sorrow; upon which he turned his Discourse into earnest Prayer, and with wonderful Enlargement and Fervour, wrestled with God for a lengthening out of their Tranquility, and then humbly confessing the Sins

of their Churches, acknowledged the Justice of God in whatsoever he should bring upon them, and by a very solemn Resignation laid themselves and all their Privileges at the Foot of God, and proceeded most earnestly to beg, that if God saw it meet for his own Honour to suffer the Carcasses of that Generation to fall in the Wilderness, that yet he would revive his Work in the next, that it might gloriously appear to their Children, to which the whole Congregation gave their assent by a loud Amen.

THIS Account I had from Mr. Shower himself, with many Particulars which I cannot recollect, and if I mistake not, he told me, this was one of the last of their publick Solemnities at *Charenton*; the Court took Umbrage at the Numbers that resorted thither, and at the mighty Concern they discovered for their expiring Religious Liberties; and surely they had just Reason for it, the Thing they feared soon came upon them, and those famous Churches still lie in their Ruins; that Generation on whom this great Calamity first came is almost worn out, and another is risen up, waiting for the return of those earnest Prayers that were so many Years ago made for them: And as we hope God will appoint them a set Time and remember them, and that the Number of the Years is drawing towards its Accomplishment, it becomes all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity, to join in Prayer with them that God would

would turn away his Anger from his holy Mountain, and would cause his Face to shine upon his Sanctuary, which is desolate for the Lord's sake.

ANOTHER memorable Passage which I have heard about Mr. Shower's Travels, very well deserves to be recorded; When he and his Companions were at *Geneva*, where the Narrative tells you they continued for some Time, and where they contracted an Acquaintance with the Reverend and Learned Monsieur *Turretin* the Younger, it appeared to them upon their first Conversation with that learned Divine and the rest of that City, that they had no very favourable Opinion of our Nonconformity in *England*, having received their Account of the Case from those who thought they had no better Way left them to justify their own Conformity than to condemn our Dissent; but after that Mr. Shower, Mr. Goodwin, and others, had faithfully stated the Case to them, and laid before them the Terms we are obliged to submit to, they declared themselves well satisfied, that there was indeed but too just Cause given for our Dissent, and they treated those Ministers and Gentlemen with a very particular Respect as long as they continued with them.

THESE are all the Remarks I am capable of adding to that ingenious Narrative you have already had concerning the Travels of Mr. Shower; upon the Whole, it is very evident, that this his leisure Time was not lost

Time

Time, as it was a providential Advantage of such a Nature as few of his Brethren have been favoured with, so he knew as well as any how to make a right Use of it, and that both as a Gentleman, a Scholar and a Minister; so that upon his Return, the People to whom he preached, not only enjoyed the Benefit of his further Labours, but of his past leisure Time, and the Observations he had made while absent from them.

AND from that Time he greatly advanced in his Usefulness and Acceptation, and went forth in the Strength of the Lord, making mention of his Righteousness, even of his only; *Many a comfortable Day* (says a Friend and Companion of his) *I have had with him in the Worship of God after his return from abroad.*

BUT the Court of England at that Time being very much under the Direction and Influence of the Court of France, gave into Measures agreeable to theirs; in France the Reformed Churches were to be destroy'd; in England the Dissenting Protestants were to be run down and ruined, that they might be no longer capable of opposing the Methods concerted between England and France, to establish Popery and Arbitrary Power.

THEN it was that the vilest of Men were encouraged to disturb the Dissenters in the Worship of God, in those Assemblies which their Enemies thought fit to reproach with the diminutive Term of *Conventicles*, by which they would have them thought to be little

and illegal Assemblies: As for their being little, every Body must needs observe that if they had been less than they were, they would not have been so offensive; it was their being large and numerous, well frequented, and by Persons of Rank and Reputation, (while the Established Church was thin enough of Hearers) it was this that made them so obnoxious.

AND as to their being illegal, tho' it was so far true, that there were Laws in Being against them sanguinary and severe enough, yet the King in his Turn, and the Parliament in theirs, had declared against putting the Penal Laws against Dissenters in Execution; and the House of Commons had pass'd a Resolution, That to do so was an Encouragement to Papists; and these Indulgences thus declared, they were willing to suppose were good Evidence, that in what their Assemblies were so unhappy as to interfere with the Laws in Being, the Fault was not so much in them as in the Laws so imprudently made against them.

FOR some Time before a Popish Prince ascended the Throne, and Popish Counsels so far prevail'd, that it was not safe for a Dissenting Minister to be seen in the Streets of *London*; many of them were thrown into common Goals; their Meetings, which for some Years they held by Connivance, were every where suppress'd; they chose in some Places to meet in the Night in small Numbers, rather than be wholly destitute of the Worship

Mr. JOHN SHOWER. 51

of God in that Way of Administration which they thought most conformable to his Word.

THE Civil Liberties of the People of *England* met with a violent Shock at the same Time; some of the best Blood that ever run in *English* Veins was then spilt as Water upon the Ground; Juries were pack'd, false Witnesses suborned, corrupt Judges upon the Bench, and Mercenary Lawyers encouraged at the Bar, with noisy Insolence to hunt down the true Friends of the *English* Constitution.

IN so deplorable a State of Affairs, many Ministers, Gentlemen and others, thought fit to withdraw from their Native Country; such as Mr. *How*, Mr. *Shower*, Mr. *Nathaniel Taylor*, Sir *Patience Ward*, and that worthy excellent Citizen, Mr. *Papillon*, with many others; Mr. *Papillon's* Case is very well known, and the violent Prosecution that he was under for asserting the Rights and Privileges of the Freemen of *London*, which were so notoriously invaded and violated by the worthless Instruments of a Popish Faction.

It leaves a Reproach upon our Nation, which will hardly be wiped off, that so excellent a Person as the Reverend Mr. *How*, whose unaffected Piety, polite and profound Learning, and most sweet, ingenious and genteel Temper, entitled him to the high Esteem of the greatest and best Men in the Land, of all Perswasions, that such a One at that Time could not have a safe and quiet Habitation in his Native Country.

THESE worthy Persons retired to *Holland*; Mr. *How* chose to reside at *Utrecht*, whither several young Gentlemen and Students repaired to him, and had the Advantage of his Conversation and Instructions, which some of them remember with thankfulness to God, and will do to their dying Day.

THE States of *Holland*, our best Neighbours and Friends in the Times of our Distress, shewed a very particular Respect to these *English* Refugees, and gave them that double Honour which they knew to be due to them.

Mr. *SHOWER* lived at *Utrecht* for some time, and then removed to *Rotterdam*, where he continued upwards of three Years; he there found those Reverend and very Learned Ministers, Mr. *Joseph Hill* and Mr. *John Spademan*, Pastors to the *English* Church in that Place; here Mr. *Shower* and Mr. *Spademan* contracted a very intimate Acquaintance and entire Friendship, which never ceased to their dying Day; Mr. *Shower* was chosen Evening Lecturer to the *English* Church at *Rotterdam*, and had great Reputation and Success among them.

It was not long before he came to *Rotterdam* God provided a suitable Yoke-fellow for him, Mrs. *Elizabeth Falkener*, Neice to Mr. *Papillon*, in whose Family she then was, a very agreeable Companion to them, and a voluntary Sharer with them in all the Inconveniences of their Exile. The Character given her by worthy Mr. *Spademan*, one that that knew not how to give flattering Titles,

is sufficient to shew how happy Mr. Shower was in that Relation; they were married at *Utrecht*, Sept. 24. 1687. they lived together not full four Years, in which Time they had three Children, *Ann* the Eldest, born at *Rotterdam*, lived to be a great Comfort to her Father, and very happily married to Mr. *J. Warner*; the second a Son born at *London*, and died within the Month, baptized *John* by Mr. *Nath. Taylor*; the third a Daughter, named *Hannah*, baptized by Mr. *Spademan*, the Mother and Child both died in less than a Months Time.

THE Providence of God opened a new and a wonderful Scene in *England*, which had a great Influence upon all the Affairs of *Europe*; the Popish Prince then on the Throne being pushed on by the Jesuits, and encouraged by his Success against the Duke of *Monmouth* and his Party in the *West*, and the Duke of *Argyle* in the *North*, thought it time to advance more openly and with greater Spirit in the long concerted Design of changing our excellent Constitution into an Unlimited Monarchy, and Re-establishing Popery upon the Ruins of the Reformation.

THE large and bold Steps that Prince took to accomplish his Design, justly alarm'd the whole Body of Protestants in the Nation, who now seemed entirely to have laid aside their little Party Quarrels, and united themselves firmly, and exerted themselves vigorously in Defence of all that was dear to them.

THE High Party seem'd to be at length convinced that they had been very much mistaken in their Politicks, and ensnared by Papists to give into dangerous and destructive Measures, and their Zeal to retrieve the Affairs of the Nation made every Body willing to forget their former ill Conduct, not suspecting that ever they could have been capable of relapsing into it again.

THE Cries of a sinking Nation prevailed with the Prince of *Orange* to attempt their Rescue, which by the signal Blessings of God he effected in a little Time, in a Manner so easy and gentle, as was Matter of Wonder to us all.

SEVERAL of the *English* Exiles returned with him, and the rest stay not long after him. Some indeed of the Dissenting Ministers had taken the Opportunity which King *James's* Declaration for *Liberty of Conscience* had given them, and returned to their Places and People before the Revolution.

Mr. SHOWER continued in *Holland* the longest of them; it was above two Years after the Revolution, before he left *Rotterdam*, and he did it in Compliance with an Invitation he had from the excellent Mr. *How*, and the People that attended his Ministry.

I SHALL give you an Account drawn up by Mr. *Show*er himself, of that Invitation and the Consequences of it, which is as follows.

REASONS

REASONS of my Resolution to leave Rotterdam
upon the Call of Mr. How's People at London,
Jan. 19. 1690.

‘UPON the Removal of Mr. Williams,
‘ who was wont to preach to Mr. How's
‘ People in the Afternoon, one or more of the
‘ Members of that Congregation wrote to me,
‘ that if I were not resolved to spend all my
‘ Days out of *England*, that People (who had de-
‘ sired my coming among 'em a Year and a half
‘ before, but being so lately settled here by the
‘ Countenance of the Magistrates, I refus'd) were
‘ like to chuse me again. I replied to this Effect,
‘ *That now there was Liberty granted to Dissenters*
‘ *by Law, and I had been near three Years at Rot-*
‘ *terdam, should not be unwilling upon a Call of*
‘ *such a People to remove.* My own and Wife's
‘ Relations very earnestly desiring our living
‘ among 'em, and several of the many Ac-
‘ quaintance I have at *London* (having for-
‘ merly preach'd above six Years in the Ci-
‘ ty) often pressing my Return.

‘ UPON this they chuse me; and after Mr.
‘ How and Mr. Taylor had acquainted me
‘ with it, and others, I went over to preach
‘ among 'em, and discourse my Friends before
‘ I came to a Resolution; having preach'd four
‘ or five times, I declared my Acceptance of
‘ their Call, and promis'd upon my return
‘ to *Holland*, to hasten the Removal of my
‘ Family with what convenient speed I might.

‘ The Acceptance I found among them, as appears since, and their unanimous Choice and Desire of my coming, gave me full Satisfaction that I ought to return; and with that Resolution I left them.

‘ It pleased God to give me a speedy Passage back to *Rotterdam* as I had to *London*: Within few Days after, by the Death of Mr. *Hodge* at *Amsterdam*, a Minister was wanted there; several wrote to me, whether I were not capable of accepting a Call to a Pastoral Charge, as supposing I was to have none at *London*, &c. I wrote back, that I might leave Mr. *How*’s People for a Pastoral Charge, as Mr. *Williams* before me did, but was altogether adverse to come to *Amsterdam*, and mentioned many Reasons; and not long after, in Consideration of the Collegue there, and the greater Auditory at *London*, or here then at *Amsterdam*, did positively declare, if they chose me, should not accept it, and therefore wish’d ’em not to let my Name be further mentioned, &c. for I would tarry here, if I removed not to *London*, rather than come to them; tho’ the Maintenance there was larger.

‘ THE Magistrates of *Rotterdam*, in Discourse with some *English* Merchants and others, encourag’d ’em to request to make me a third Minister here, if a Pastoral Charge would detain me: When it was made known to me, I had little against it, but rather lik’d it, as having a real Affection and Gratitude

to this People, who have been so kind to me, and so diligently attended my Ministry for three Years; and under the Apprehension I had of my Work at *London*, I could not judge otherwise but that a Pastoral Charge might alter my Resolution of removing, (and had it been offer'd before I went over, very probably might have kept me here.)

‘I THEREUPON declared my willingness they should go forward with that Request, provided my *London* Friends could be satisfied, and that I should need their Assistance in order to it, which was promised. The next Morning I acquainted Captain *Vanderlaune*, that I judg'd it most reasonable that Mr. *How* and his People should first be wrote to, before the Request was translated or subscribed; and what I perceiv'd and heard of some of the *English* Merchants with respect to this Affair, did much influence it. I wrote to Mr. *How* the plain Matter of Fact, and desired his Thoughts and Counsel, and offer'd Mr. *Sprint* to write under my Letter that Evening, or desired he would by next Post, which he did, and mentioned what I consented to in the Consistory: He also desired Mr. *Hill* to write to Dr. *Sampson*, one of the principal Members, his Acquaintance, but he did not think fit to do so.

‘Mr. *How* answers those Letters with that which satisfied me I ought to remove from hence to *London*; he says, *That my Call*

‘was

' was to Joynt-Work with him in the Labours
 ' of the Gospel; that he told my Electors he would
 ' assist me as well as I him, we would never dis-
 ' agree about sharing the Work, but studiously a-
 ' voided the Name of a Lecturer or Assistant.
 ' This of my joyning with Mr. How in the
 ' Work of a Pastor doth alter the Case, and
 ' had I so apprehended it when I came back
 ' from London, should not have permitted any
 ' Offer or Attempt for my Stay in Holland
 ' to have gone so far. Considering Persons
 ' will therefore I hope excuse me.

' But the great Question into which all the
 ' other must resolve is, In what Place I may
 ' be most Useful?

' Mr. How urges for London, that the con-
 ' stant Auditory is double there to what it is
 ' at Rotterdam, and many Occasions will offer
 ' of preaching to larger Auditories, and to a
 ' great Variety of People in other Congrega-
 ' tions of the City, besides Excursions now
 ' and then into the Country, where are no
 ' fixed Preachers.

' HE adds farther, That my coming for
 ' England now hath a Tendency to greater Ser-
 ' viceableness hereafter, if God spare me, where-
 ' as by accepting a Pastoral Charge here, I
 ' should cut my self off from any such Things,
 ' and shall be confin'd for the rest of my Life
 ' to an Handful in a Foreign Country, where
 ' are two others already. So that, he saith,
 ' I am obliged by a former Obligation to
 ' Christ to come to London, as being devoted

' to

to his Service, and bound to be where I
may most serve his Interest; my Promise to
that People was a supervening Obligation to
what I was under before unto Christ our
common Lord; it only binds as succedaneous
to that, and suitable to it: I only promised
them that which was my Duty before, &c.
Therefore, saith he, break off farther Par-
lies, and hasten to your Charge, where you
are greatly needed and earnestly desired.

UPON this Letter, seriously considering the
Contents of it, I am clear in my own
Thoughts, that I ought to go, and my Bro-
ther *Spademan* is of the same Mind, and o-
thers to whom that Letter hath been com-
municated.

BEING come to a Resolution about my
Removal, as to Matter of Conscience, (ha-
ving been far from determining hastily, or
without seeking to God for Counsel, or wait-
ing for it,) there are many Things might
be added to confirm me in this Choice.

NOT only is it my Native Country I re-
move to, and among my Relations, but at
London I preach'd constantly for above six
Years, and I hope to the spiritual Good of
several young Persons, who are now Ma-
sters of Families, and will rejoice to hear
me again, and I may hope to be service-
able to such, rather than others. On the
contrary here at *Rotterdam*, many have been
so offended at my last Voyage to *England*,
and more since by my Intentions to remove,

‘ that they would hear me with Prejudice, if I
 ‘ should stay, and get less Good than otherwise;
 ‘ and several would think the Addition of 4 or
 ‘ 5 Hundred above the Settlement of the other
 ‘ *English* Ministers so great and wonderful a
 ‘ a thing, and have talk’d of it in such Terms,
 ‘ as make me think some Prejudice against
 ‘ me, as Covetous and Worldly, and might
 ‘ lessen the Success of my Ministry here as to
 ‘ some; neither is it certain how well both
 ‘ my Collegues might be able to take it,
 ‘ should it come to be a real Case.

‘ I MIGHT mention the Advantages of the
 ‘ Converse and Preaching that is at *London*,
 ‘ for my own Improvement and Proficiency
 ‘ in holy Knowledge and Usefulness; the
 ‘ Advantages also for the Education of my
 ‘ Children, if God should further increase my
 ‘ Family.

‘ I MIGHT urge the looking after some Con-
 ‘ cerns in the Country, both of my own and
 ‘ Wife’s, which are now neglected to our Pre-
 ‘ judice very considerably.

‘ AND that ’tis the Opinion of my most
 ‘ approved and faithful Friends in *England*, if I
 ‘ came not now, am never like to come
 ‘ at all.

‘ THAT the more rational and considering
 ‘ Persons of the *English* here, will not at all be
 ‘ disobligh’d by my Removal; the Number
 ‘ of Families and Persons is but small to that
 ‘ of those at *London*, which I should disoblige
 ‘ by staying here.

‘ Lastly,

Lastly, THAT which sways much with me, the Judgment of so judicious and holy a Person as Mr. *How*, that my Duty is plain and indispensable to come; and that he and others there have in publick and private put up many a Prayer to God, before I was chosen and since, with respect to my coming among 'em. To which I have joyn'd my own for Direction, and now do for a Blessing on my designed Remove, and on the People I leave here; hoping God will send another in my room, whom he will own and bless, or double his Spirit on those my Brethren in the Ministry who shall continue. *Amen.*

Mr. SHOWER being now returned to his Native Country, and joyn'd with one of the greatest Men for Learning, Gifts and Graces that our Age has known, and in a Congregation of the most exemplary and judicious Christians, met with very great Respect and Encouragement, and yet he continued not above a Year in that Relation; his Preaching was so acceptable in *London*, and drew so many Hearers, that some of his Friends thought two such Ministers as Mr. *How* and Mr. *Shower* (tho' their Tallents were of a different Kind) were too much to fall to the Share of one People.

AND there being a Neighbouring Congregation now at a Loss, their Minister Mr. *Sam. Borsett* being under great Indisposition, and incapable of going on with his Work, they

†

agreed

agreed to invite Mr. Shower to take upon him the Pastoral Charge over them; this Congregation was gathered by that holy humble Minister, Mr. Edmund Calamy the Younger, and consisted of grave and experienced Christians; tho' it was not very numerous, they rightly judged, that if they could obtain so popular and profitable a Minister as Mr. Shower, they should by the Blessing of God be both edified and multiplied.

THIS Invitation cost Mr. Shower some Trouble and many Thoughts of Heart; Mr. How was loath to part with him, and the Honour he had for Mr. How, made it very difficult to him to do any thing that would grieve him. Those of the Congregation that had been so earnest and industrious to gain him from Rotterdam, took it unkindly that he should entertain any Thoughts of leaving them, especially so soon after he was come among them. In a Word, their Affection for him and his Ministry grew in some of them a little passionate under the Apprehensions of losing him, as it generally does in Cases of that Nature.

HOWEVER, Mr. Shower was satisfied that it was his Duty to accept this Call, in which it is meet we should think he was determined by the Prospect he had of upholding and building up a Congregation that laboured under some Disadvantages; he accepted their Call, on the 8th of May, 1691. and preached at their Meeting-House in Currier's Hall the Lord's Day following.

THEY

THEY were not disappointed in the Hopes they had of a growing Auditory, and the Vacancy at Mr. How's was very well filled by Mr. Thomas Reynolds, then a young Man and newly come from Holland, who after some Years, was by a Call of the like Nature prevailed with to take the Pastoral Care of a Congregation that had been under the Ministry of the Reverend Mr. Thomas Kentish; and how much to the Publick Benefit as well as their own, I need not say; it is well known in the City and Country.

Mr. SHOWER's Congregation was in a little Time so much encreased, that the Place was too streight for them; they soon quitted *Currier's-Hall*, and removed to a much more capacious and convenient Place in *Jewin-street*, where they continued several Years, in which Time he passed through a great Variety of Providential Events, and in the midst of them all, went on with his Work in a very zealous lively manner, with great Diligence and remarkable Success.

THE first Year of his Ministry with Mr. Borfett's People, he was bereaved of the Desire of his Eyes, a suitable affectionate Yokefellow, of whom Mr. Spademan has made very honourable mention in a Sermon preached on that sorrowful Occasion. 'He takes Notice of
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' which

' which she was related : And in the Choice
 ' that she made when she changed her Con-
 ' dition ; neither the Prejudices of the Age nor
 ' the Advantage of other Offers, could hinder
 ' her from accepting One as the Partner of her
 ' Life, from whom she had reason to expect the
 ' best Assistance in the Service of God and in the
 ' Concerns of her Soul ; and this she did at
 ' a Time when there was no Prospect of
 ' that Tranquility which now encourageth
 ' Persons of his Character and Profession.

THAT very pathetic Discourse which Mr.
Shower himself preached on this Occasion, and
 which is published, about *Mourning for the*
Dead, will make it evident how desirous he
 was not only that his Sorrow might be mo-
 derated, but his Zeal for God quickened by
 this awaking Providence ; I can hardly for-
 bear reciting some very tender and lively Pas-
 sages, but the * Book being in many Hands,
 I leave them to the Reader's Perusal at his
 Leisure.

WITHIN the Space of two Years, God made
 up to him this great Loss, by providing for
 him another suitable Companion. On the 29th
 of *December*, 1692. he was married to Mrs.
Constance White, Daughter to an eminent Ci-
 tizen of *London* ; she was a Person of a very
 meek and sweet Disposition, and of exemplary
 Seriousness and entire Devotedness to God ; I

* Vid. *The Mourner's Companion*, p. 143, 144, 145.

have seldom heard of a Person more universally loved and valued for these excellent Qualifications than she was. He was very happy in so tender and good a Relation for the Space of about Nine Years, for so long they lived together. This second Marriage God was pleased to bless with several Children; the three Eldest, two Daughters and a Son, died very young; the three next, *Martha*, *Bartholomew* and *John*, are still living; the seventh named *William*, died at Nurse; and on July 18. 1701. at *Clerkenwell*, this excellent Gentlewoman died in Childbed, having been deliver'd of a dead Child, leaving a very affectionate sorrowful Husband in a Vale of Tears, but supported by Divine Consolations under so great a Trial: And what contributed very much to the Comfort of the Remainder of his Life, was the gracious Presence of God with him in his Ministry, and the numerous spiritual Off-spring who owned him as their Father in Christ. And he did not want Comfort in the Children that were born to him in his House; one by the first Wife, of whom mention has been already made, and three by the second, whom he lived to see looking towards Heaven, and chusing their Father's God for their God, and behaving themselves with great Affection and Duty to their surviving Parents, and with Wisdom, and Love, and Tenderness one towards another; I am perswaded that in blessing God will bless them, yea, that

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he hath blessed them with Spiritual Blessings in Heavenlies in Christ Jesus.

IN the same Year, 1701. in which so great a Breach was made upon Mr. *Shower*, as to the Comforts of Relative Life, the Congregation still encreasing, and consisting very much of Persons that lived in the Center of the City, and were successful in Trade, they determined to build a new Meeting-House, whose Situation might be more convenient, and its Dimensions more proportionate to so numerous an Auditory as they were now grown up to. They fix'd upon a Place in the *Old Jury*, and there provided themselves of a very large and well built Meeting-House, which is so well known, as not to need any Description here. In this Place, as in the former, God was with them, and encreased them more and more; it was some Years (as I take it) before they left *Jewen-street*, that Mr. *Shower* had the Assistance of Mr. *Timothy Rogers*, who was very acceptable both in his Preaching and Conversation; and tho' God has been pleased greatly to afflict him, insomuch as that he has been ready to look upon himself as a Lamp despised, a broken Vessel, and as a dead Man out of Mind; yet I believe his Work is with the Lord and his Judgment with his God; he is not forgotten by his Friends, who is glad to hear that he is yet bearing Witness for God, tho' in a more private Station, justifying God in all the Dispensations of his

his Providence, and waiting for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life.

I OWN my self very much his Debtor for several Hints I have received from him concerning Mr. Shower's Life and Ministry, and much rejoyce in the distinct and affectionate Remembrance he hath of the many sweet and comfortable Years of Sabbaths that they spent together, both in *Jewen-Street* and the *Old-Jury*. Mr. Shower would often speak with pleasure of their *Jewen-Street* Opportunities to the last. It is now, I think, about eight Years ago, that I heard him bear his part in Prayer, on the solemn Occasion of the choice of a Minister in that Congregation that then possessed the Meeting-House in *Jewen-Street*; and I remember very well towards the end of his Prayer, he broke out into a most affectionate, thankful Acknowledgment of the many Tokens he and his Friends had received of the Presence of God with them in that Place, it had been to them a *Bethel*, the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven; he enlarged upon this with great propriety of Expression, and with many Tears, which moved and melted the whole Assembly.

WE may very well suppose, when he preached in *Jewen-Street*, he was in the prime and vigour of his Days, I take it, that he must be about his 44th Year when he removed into the *Old-Jury*; and I believe there are few Men, especially few Ministers, but who find they are turn'd their Zenith by that Time; that though their Judgments may be more mature, and
F 2 their

their Experiences much improved, yet the readiness of Invention and the liveliness of their Affections will suffer some Abatement.

THERE was little or no appearance of any such Decay in Mr. *Shower's* Ministerial Performances for several Years after his Remove to *Old-Jury*; he went on with his usual Vigour and Zeal, and had not only the most decent Place of Worship, but one of the most considerable Assemblies about the City; his Labours were peculiarly agreeable and useful to the better Rank of young Persons, which gave him the pleasing Prospect that God would continue his favourable Presence with them for a great while yet to come.

THE most remarkable breach that was made upon Mr. *Shower's* Constitution, was by a very malignant Fever that seized him at *Epsom*, May 12. 1706. this he has recorded as a very memorable Providence; and he observes, that he was taken the very Day that the Illustrious Duke of *Marlborough* fought and won the glorious Battle of *Ramellies*; the Distemper came on with so much violence, that it was not without great difficulty that he was brought to *London* the next Day, and confined to his Chamber, and for the most part to his Bed, being attended by four Physicians and two Surgeons for three Weeks together; his Life was very much desired, and yet often despair'd of by all about him; many Hours of Prayer were spent for him in his Meeting-House for several Days, which he has recorded with thankful-

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ness God was pleased to answer ; it was then very evident how great an Interest he had in the Esteem and Affections of his Brethren of every Denomination, and of what Moment and Consequence they took his Life to be to the Interest of Religion.

His Recovery from this dangerous Illness every Body took for a very remarkable Return of Prayer ; his People and his Friends received him as one raised from the Dead ; and that which yet endeared him more to them all was, the good Frame of Spirit he was in during the time of his Sickness ; of this I am yet a living Witness, I lived at that time very near him, and was seldom a whole Day absent from him ; he always seemed to me to be in an humble, calm, comfortable, resigned Frame, I never could discern that he was afraid of Death with any Amazement.

UPON his first appearance in the Pulpit after this Fit of Sickness, he preached his Thanksgiving Sermon from *Psal. cxvi. 8, 9.* *For thou hast delivered my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from falling ; I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living.* He began his Discourse in this manner :

I KNOW it is Matter of Thankfulness as well as Wonder to many of you to see me here this Day, and to hear me read this Passage of Scripture, but is there any thing too hard for the Lord ? Is there any thing too hard for Prayer, humble, earnest, united, continued Prayer in publick and private ?

TOWARDS the Conclusion of that Sermon, he express'd himself in such moving Words as these : ' Let me exhort you to help me to be ' thankful, joyn with me in praising the Name ' of the Lord; and here I find my Thoughts ' multiply, the Springs of Passion are touch'd so ' many ways, it would be easier to enlarge than ' to contract. My Friends, you that have ' mourn'd for me, and so importunately prayed ' for Life, assist me to offer a Sacrifice of Praise ' to the God of my Life; if you and I should ' fail in this, how soon may all that's past be ' lost and blasted, either for want of continued ' Health, or by provoking God to leave me ' to the power of Temptation, to do some ' foolish Thing that may spoil my publick Use- ' fulness, spoil the Credit, and hinder the Suc- ' cess of my Ministry for the future? What ' dependent Creatures are all of us? How ' humbly should we walk with God? What ' need of Faith and Prayer every Day for ' Wisdom and Grace to preserve us? I need ' your Prayers now, as much it may be as ' when my Pulse was thought to be gone, ' when my Eyes were closed, and those about ' me said, *He is dead or dying!*

AND in the close of all, ' I acknowledge all ' God's Judgments to be just, and his Ways ' perfect, that in Wisdom and very Faithful- ' ness he has afflicted me; I judge and con- ' demn my self before the Lord, for Personal, ' Family, Ministerial Neglects and Faults, ' which have been many, very many, and yet ' I

do this with the Hope of finding Mercy to be faithful : Who is sufficient for a Duty of such a Relation as I am in'to so great a Number ? If God give Strength and a better Heart, if we have a fresh anointing from above, the *Psalmist's* Resolution of double Diligence, which I know is my Duty, shall be my endeavour ; but this Engagement will never be well performed without your earnest Prayers to Heaven for me, joyned with mine for you from Day to Day.

IN this good Frame Mr. *Shower* returned to his Work, and went on comfortably in it, but his Health and Strength were much impaired, and never fully recovered to his dying Day ; towards the end of the Year following, Dec. 7. 1707. God tried him with another great Affliction, in the Death of his Eldest Daughter, who has been already mentioned, after he had married her entirely to his Satisfaction ; she was seized in Child-bed with the Small-Pox, the Child lived but a few Hours, the Mother died in a few Days, and both buried together in *Mercers-Chappel* ; this Providence made a deep Wound in Mr. *Shower's* tender Spirit, and in his broken Constitution.

AND yet it was evident to those that attended on his Ministry, that God was still with him of a Truth ; and in the last part of his Life he was not without some remarkable Seals of it. He was very much pleas'd under his growing Infirmities, that after his old and intimate Colleague, Mr. *Rogers*, was no longer able to su-

stain the Weight of that part of the Work that he had for many Years so well performed; God provided for them the Assistance of a Person of so much Judgment, Prudence, and Goodness, as Mr. Bennet, in whom Mr. Shower often declar'd a very particular Satisfaction. This gave him new Spirits and fresh Courage, and many an excellent lively Sermon we had from him in this part of his Life, not only in his own Congregation, but in his Turn on the *Tuesday* Lecture at *Salter's-Hall*.

He was, however, followed with frequent Scorbutick Indispositions and a failure of Appetite from Year to Year; in which he received some present Relief by drinking *Tunbridge Waters*: But after two or three Months time his ailance returned, which made his publick Work more difficult to him, but yet went on in it, and was observed to be very frequent in secret Duty; and so much the more as he saw the Day approaching.

IN the Year 1713, in the Month of *September*, he went to *Epping* to the Country House of his good Friend Mr. *Samuel Cotton*, and there, on the 14th Day of that Month, was suddenly seized with a Paralytick Fit, which gave him a mighty Shock; and after, with some Difficulty, he was brought to his own House, he continued some Weeks under it; but by the Blessing of God, upon the good Skill and tender Care of his Physicians, he got pretty well over it, and was restored to his Pulpit and People again.

BUT

BUT from that Time there were more evident Tokens of an universal Decay ; which no Body was more sensible of than himself ; and being of tender Spirit, he was apt to be discouraged, fearing this his Labours were not so acceptable as formerly they had been : But I have heard him preach many an excellent Sermon after that Time ; and the very natural Infirmities of one that had spent so much Time and Strength in the Work of the Lord, have something venerable in them.

THUS he went on sometimes a little reviv'd, sometimes down again, and at length found it necessary to retire to *Stoke-Newington* ; where he was much pleased with the frequent Opportunities he had of conversing with the truly Honourable Sir *John Hartop*, Bar. and Mr. *Nathanael Gould*, with other good Friends ; nor was his Company less acceptable to them.

ONE of the last Sermons he preach'd, was from *Prov. xvi. 33. The Lot is cast into the Lap, but the whole disposal thereof is from the Lord.* Which nice and intricate Subject he discoursed on very judiciously and profitably, notwithstanding all the Disadvantages he then labour'd under.

I THINK the very last Sermon of all was at his own Place in the *Old-Jury*, from *Psal. lxxix. 1. The Lord reigns, let the Earth rejoice, let the Multitude of the Isles be glad thereof.* And having from the former Subject in Two or Three Discourses, treated of the Extent of the Divine Providence to the most casual and contingent Matters ;

Matters; he proceeded from this Text to shew the great Blessings of God's Providential Government. This was preach'd on the 27th of March, 1715.

FROM that Time till the Month of *June*, he was taken off from the Work that he had so long, and with so much delight, been employ'd in; he would often bemoan himself as a broken Vessel; he had often that Complaint of *Job* in his Mouth, *Chap. xvii. 11. My Days are past, my Purposes are broken off, even the Thoughts of my Heart.* But he did not murmur, he was desirous to hope, and quietly to wait for the Salvation of God. He was seized on the Lord's Day Evening, *June 12.* following, with a nervous Asthma; it press'd very hard upon him, he labour'd and languish'd under it for a Fortnight, with much Patience, Comfort, and Resignation to the Will of God. He spoke sweetly to those about him of the Goodness of God; *My God is good, he is good to me; tho I am very bad, God is very good.* He met Death not only without Terror, but with Desire; and on *Tuesday* the 28th of the same Month, he breathed out his precious Soul into the Hands of the Lord Jesus.

FOR some Time before he died, he express'd a great Satisfaction that he had liv'd to see the Protestant Succession take place, and so wise and good a Prince fill the Throne: He had a great Concern for the continued Unity and flourishing State of his Beloved People, and they on their part shewed a just Esteem for him,

him, by the decent and honourable Funeral they made for him at *High-Gate* on *Tuesday, July 7.* where they paid their general and solemn Attendance. And I cannot doubt but as long as any of them are alive, his Memory and his dear Posterity will be always treated by them with deserved Respect and Honour; and by their keeping the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, their profiting under Mr. Shower's Ministry will appear to all Men.

AFTER I have here given you this Narrative of the general Course of Mr. Shower's Conversation, and the end thereof, it would be needless to draw up his particular Character; this ought to be left to every one from what they have observed of him, either in these Memoirs or from their own Acquaintance. All I shall farther attempt is, to touch upon some of the principal Lineaments that distinguish'd him so observably in his Ministerial Capacity.

THE Temper of his Spirit was peculiarly Tender and Affectionate, something of this he had by Nature, and more by Grace; he was a very compassionate Minister and Friend, and could truly say, *Who is weak and I am not weak, who is offended and I burn not?* He was sensibly affected with the Infirmities of his Friends, whether bodily or spiritual. This tenderness of Spirit shewed it self not only in his private Conversation with his Friends, but in his publick Ministrations; the lively Affections of his Soul would often discover themselves

selves in many Tears, both while he was pleading with God in Prayer, and with Men in Preaching; and as Flame kindles Flame, he had a natural not an artificial Way of moving the Hearts of the People.

THE Talent in which he seemed to me to excel was, that Spirit of Prayer that God had poured upon him. He had a wonderful Freedom of Thought and Sweetness of Expression in Prayer; and this joined with a holy humble Importunity, enabled him to lead the Congregation with great inward Pleasure and Advantage in that Duty; especially on more publick and solemn Occasions.

IN Preaching, he distinguished himself by a choice of Subjects that had something in them more directly suited to strike the Consciences of Sinners and the Experiences of the Saints: If any Difficulty or Criticism lay before him in the Explication of the Text, he would very handsomely solve it without any Toil or Ostentation, and then by a few and short Hints, hasten to the Application, where one might easily discern he longed to be; and would there generally have something surprizingly useful, instructive, and affecting; if in some Parts of the Discourse he seemed to be on the Level, or in the Vallies, you seldom failed of having him in the Mount before he had done; and not in a noisy, empty, formal way, but so as to recommend himself to the Consciences of all in the Sight of God.

IN the Administration of the Lord's Supper, what was more peculiar to him, was, that among other proper Means to lead the Communicants into the true and spiritual Part of that Ordinance, he frequently recited a serious and Scriptural Form of Self-Dedication at the Table of the Lord, containing the Substance of that Covenant of Grace which they were then to renew and seal. I take it for granted, that Form is in the Hands of most of the Communicants, which doubtless they will frequently review, that they may see the explicate Engagements they lie under to their God. In this Ordinance he would often apply the Promises of the Covenant to the particular State and Circumstances that he knew any of the People to be under, while he delivered the Elements to them; which was the Method that eminently holy Mr. *William Bagshaw* constantly used; as hath been observed in the Preface to his Funeral Sermon.

I SHUT up these Memoirs with as true a Catalogue as I could obtain of the printed Works of Mr. *Shower*, which have met with good Acceptance among sober and serious People of all Persuasions; for as he was a peaceable Minister, that never affected to differ with any, or engage himself in Disputes about Matters in Difference; so his Company, his Preaching, and his Writings, have been as much approved, and as little censur'd as most of the Ministers of our Age.

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9. Family Religion, in Three Letters to a Friend. 12mo. 1694.

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4to. 1702.

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With preceding

A

Funeral-Sermon

ON THE
Much Lamented Death

Of the late Reverend
Mr. JOHN SHOWER,

PREACH'D AT
OLD-FURT, July 10. 1715.

By W. T O N G.

L O N D O N :
Printed for JOHN CLARK and EBEN. SCADGEL.
M D C C X V I .

Universal Sermon

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OF

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PREACHED AT

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By W. T. M. G.

LONDON.

At the Sign of the Crown in St. Pauls Church-yard.

1715.

to
82

A

Funeral-Sermon

For the Late Reverend and Excellent

Mr. JOHN SHOWER.

2 TIM. iv. 7, 8.

I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing.



NE would think these Words were too great to have been spoken by any Man in this World, they rather sound like the triumphant Songs of the Saints in Glory; Who is able to say, while on this side Heaven, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course?*

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BUT

2 A FUNERAL-SERMON for

BUT here we see the Excellency of the Grace of Faith in its Nature and Working; it is the Evidence of Things not seen, and the Substance of Things hoped for; it is able to possess its Object by Anticipation, and begin an Heaven upon Earth.

WHEN the Grace of Faith draws near to its Consummation, it usually partakes more and more of the Nature of Vision and Enjoyment, especially where it has been duly improved and kept in lively Exercise.

THIS blessed Apostle *Paul* tells us elsewhere, 2 Cor. xii. 1. he remembred a Time when he saw and heard Things so inexpressibly heavenly and divine, that he knew not *whether he was in the Body or out of the Body*; if at that Time he had broken forth into such holy Exultations as we have in the Text, we should not so much have wondered at it.

BUT to speak these Things, when he knew he had not yet attained, neither was already perfect, when he had Sufferings and Death before him, and in his View great Sufferings and a cruel Death; this was a wonderful Instance of the Strength of his Faith, and of the extraordinary Manifestations of God to his Soul.

IT was the Apostle's declared earnest Desire that he might be conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ, both in Life and Death; and as an Instance of that Conformity, when he *was ready to be offered up, and the Time of his Departure was at hand*, when he was to be made a Sacrifice,

not

not to atone divine Justice, but to confirm divine Truth, he begins his Song of Victory here, *I have fought a good Fight*; thus did his Lord and Master before him, *John xvii. 4. I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own Self, &c.*

AND indeed, when the Business of Life is well done, the Trial of Death is in a manner over; they that have nothing to do but to die, will not find dying Work so hard when it comes, as it appears to be at a Distance, the Sting of Death is gone, and the Victory falls to the Christian's Share. Let us but come well to Death, and we need not fear but that we shall go well through it: It is Christ's Work to open the Door and to let the Soul into the unseen World; and if we do not forsake him while we live, there's no Danger of his leaving us when we come to die; and if Christ be with us and for us, then Death will not be Labour or Loss, but Rest and Gain to us.

AND therefore, tho' there is something extraordinary, there was nothing extravagant in the Apostle's Joy and Triumph, he had good Reason, and the best Precedent for it; but if a Christian by the Strength of Faith and Sense of the Love of God, be able thus to rejoice when he stands upon the utmost Confines of this World, how unspeakable and full of Glory will his Joy be, when he is safe landed in Heaven? then he is joined to the victorious Saints,

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that are represented in Rev. xv. 3. as standing on the other Shore of the great Sea, *having the Harps of God in their Hands, and singing the Song of Moses and the Lamb.*

I AM persuaded, there are none in this Assembly but who believe this to be the present Happiness of that faithful Servant of God, who is now taken from the Head of this Congregation, *He has fought the good Fight, he has finish'd his Course, he has kept the Faith, he has reached the Mark, he has won the Prize, and laid hold of eternal Life; it is meet we should think so of him, it would be Injustice to him, as well as Uncharitableness in any of us to question it; God sealed him with the holy Spirit of Promise before he died, and gave him the Earnest of his Inheritance, before he had the Possession of it; he finished his Course with Joy, and the Ministry he received of the Lord Jesus, having testified the Gospel of the Grace of God.*

IT would be injurious to Mr. Shower's Friends and Hearers, to suppose that they need to be told how great a Mercy they had in him, and how great a Loss they have now of him; they loved his Ministry while they enjoyed it, and have done him double Honour, both in Life and Death, that double Honour that is due to one that laboured so much and so well in the Word and Doctrine.

THEY have signally declared their Estimation of him, and they do declare it; Mr. Shower will not, cannot be easily forgotten by this Congregation: I am sensible you need not have

your

your Passions artfully wrought up, nor your Sorrows urged, and pushed on by Funeral Declamations, the Flood-gates are sufficiently opened already; may the God of Grace and Comfort turn the Streams into the right Channel, and keep them within due Bounds, and sanctify them to you, that your Hearts may be made better by the Sadness of your Countenances this Day, that this afflicting Providence may be an instructive Ordinance to you, and to us all.

AND yet methinks we cannot, we ought not to part with dear Mr. Shower, without dropping some Tears over his Grave, that tender, affectionate, lively Minister, that has shed so many Tears in this Pulpit, over the Souls of his People, in preaching to them, in praying for them, and in setting forth a Crucified Saviour before them; and not in this Pulpit only, but in almost all our Assemblies in and about the City of London, for above five or six and Thirty Years together.

SURELY some Tribute of affectionate Sorrow, more than common, is due to the Memory of One, who for so many Years, both in Preaching and Living, had the Felicity to please as many, and displease as few, as any One that ever lived in this great and populous City, where Tempers and Sentiments are so different and so variable; that happy Man that in his Master's Work, was all Life and Spirit; in common Conversation, all Mildness and unaffected Modesty!

HE

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HE is dead, we miss him, we mourn for him; our Hands are weak this Day, here is another sad Breach made upon us; it is but a Year and a few Days since excellent Mr. Henry was taken away from us, and now Mr. Shower is gone after him, while our former Wounds are still bleeding, and our broken Fence not yet made up; God is going to contend with us.

Mr. Henry and Mr. Showers had kept up a long and intimate Friendship and Correspondence with each other, like Saul and Jonathan, *they were pleasant in their Lives, and in their Deaths they were not much divided*; and consider them in the Gifts and Graces of their Ministerial Warfare, they were *swifter than Eagles*, they were *stronger than Lyons*: Weep for them then, ye Daughters of Jerusalem, they loved your Souls, and longed for your Eternal Welfare; nay, rather weep for yourselves, and for the Churches of Christ in the Land, God is taking away your Ministers, and Men are pulling down your Meeting-Houses; surely such Providences tell us, that notwithstanding all that God has done for us, His Anger is not turned away, but His Hand is stretched out still.

THEY are gone, they are safely housed before the Storm comes; they seem to look down on us, and tell us they have *fought the good Fight*, their Trials are all over, but that we who are left behind have need to be watchful and faithful, for an Hour of Temptation seems to be coming very speedily upon us.

IN

IN the Text and Context, there are two Things observable:

1. THE State and Situation the Apostle was in when he expressed himself with so much Joy and Triumph; this you will see in the Verse foregoing, *I am now ready to be offered, and the Time of my Departure is at Hand*, *ἰδὼν σπίνδραν*, I am anointed for the Sacrifice. Whether the Time of the Apostle's Sufferings and Martyrdom was as near as he apprehended it to be, is not certain, nor is it very material; it is sufficient that he looked upon it as very near, just at Hand; and tho' some learned Men think he lived nine or ten Years after this, yet there are others that may be as learned as they, think this was the last Epistle that *Paul* wrote, and that it was but a very little while before his Death, and that he saw the Preparations that were making at *Rome* for his Martyrdom, and was also warned of God that it would be very speedily.

2. THE Views which the Apostle had from this Situation; when Persons look Death in the Face, they see it is time to look about them; when they stand upon the Confines of both Worlds, they have a large Prospect; and happy are they, that from such a Situation have such a pleasant Prospect as the Apostle *Paul* had; for,

1. HE could look back with Comfort, and with a good Conscience upon his past Life and Ministry in the World he was leaving; *I have fought the good Fight.* And,

2. HE

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2. HE could look forward with Confidence and holy Joy, to the Honour and Happiness that waited for him in the World to which he was going. *Henceforth there is laid up, &c.*

BEHOLD the pleasant Prospect the Apostle had from what the World would call a melancholy Situation, to stand between the two Worlds, and look into both of them with Comfort and Confidence.

A CARNAL Mind and a guilty Conscience represent it as a fearful Thing to be doubtfully hovering between both Worlds, so as scarcely to be either in the one or in the other, almost out of the seen World, and yet not entered into the unseen World, just launching into the Ocean of Eternity, and not certainly knowing whether one shall sink or swim, be saved or lost for ever; it requires great Christian Fortitude and Firmness of Mind, to be able to say, (as I once heard a young Minister when dying) *(a) I stand upon the Brink of one World, and look into another without Amazement.*

THIS State, how awful soever it is, we shall all find ourselves in very shortly, in a dying State, upon the Confines of Time and Eternity, and we should be often thinking with ourselves, what Prospect we are then like to have; whether we can look back upon the World that we are leaving, and the Life that we are finishing, with Comfort and Satisfaction.

(a) Mr. Wilson of Warwick.

AND whether we shall be able to look forward into the World upon which we are entering with Hope and holy Confidence, whether we can dare to die; bid Farewel to Time, and Welcome to an unchangeable Eternity.

WORDS are wanting to express the Misery of those that in such a Posture, look back and see nothing but Sin and Guilt pursuing them; and look forward and see nothing but endless Torments waiting for them.

BUT they are happy beyond all Expression, that have the Apostle's Views at such a time.

HIS comfortable Retrospect; I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith.

AND his delightful Prospect; *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing.*

AND these now will be the two general Heads of my Discourse unto you.

I. **THE** Apostle's comfortable Retrospection; *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith*; that is to say, I have done my Work, the Work that my great Lord gave me to do.

I TAKE it for granted, *Paul* speaks of himself here, not only as a Christian, but as a Christian Minister, a Minister of the Gospel of Christ; for tho' it be true, that every Christian, how private soever his Station be, has a Warfare to fight, a Race to run, and a Trust

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to keep ; yet these Expressions are used in Scripture, more especially to describe the Work and Duty of a Minister of the Gospel.

THIS Apostle exhorts *Timothy to endure Hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 3.* He calls *Archippus his Fellow-Soldier, Philemon, Ver. 2.* He also applies to himself as a Minister, the Character of one that had a Race to run, *1 Cor. ix. 26, 27.* *I therefore so run not as uncertainly ; so fight I not as one that beateth the Air, but I keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection, lest by any Means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a Cast-away.* And in *Acts xx. 24.* having mentioned the finishing of his Course, he immediately adds, *And the Ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus ; the Course both of his Life and Ministry.*

AND as to the other Metaphor, keeping the Faith, or keeping the Trust, nothing is more usual in Scripture, than to apply it to the Ministry ; in *1 Tim. i. 11.* the Apostle acknowledges, that *the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed to his Trust ;* and the same Gospel was committed to *Timothy as a sacred Trust, 1 Tim. vi. 20.* *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy Trust, avoiding profane and vain Babblings, and opposition of Science, falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the Faith.*

FROM these Texts, and many more that might be mentioned, I think we have good Reason to conclude, that the Apostle principally intends the Ministerial Warfare, Course

and Trust, tho' by a just Analogy and Consequence it may be extended to the Warfare, Race and Trust of every Christian, in which the Ministers of the Gospel are the Standard-bearers, the Guides and Leaders among the People, the Keepers of the sacred Rolls of Gospel-Truth ; not for themselves only, but to open and explain them to others.

LET us then consider distinctly these three Parts of the Work of a Minister, the *Warfare* he has to fight, the *Course* or *Race* he has to run, and the *Trust* he has to keep ; and when these are well weigh'd, we shall see what gracious Qualifications every Minister ought to have and to exercise in his Ministerial Office, and what abundant Satisfaction those will have when they come to die, that have acquitted themselves well in this great Work.

I. THE Ministers of the Gospel have a Warfare to fight ; every Christian is a Soldier of Christ, every Minister is especially so ; he is a Standard-bearer in this most noble Army. Now here let us consider,

1. THE Nature of this Warfare.

2. THE Graces that are to be tried and exercised in it. And,

3. THE Comfort and Joy that will result from it, when it is well over.

I. THE Nature of this Warfare ; concerning which, I shall only observe these Things :

I. THE Ministers of Christ in this their Warfare have not their Commissions from Men, but from God ; Men may be, and ordinarily

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must be the Instruments by which their Authority is convey'd to them, but God is the Original and Fountain of all their Powers: And from hence it follows, that they are not to manage their Ministerial Warfare, according to the Will of Man, but according to the Will of God; they are not to attach themselves to any particular Party in the Field of the Church, so as to injure or neglect the rest; they are indeed to keep closest to them that keep closest to their Commission, but they are also to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. They are to consider themselves as lifted under the general Banner of Christ, to promote his Interest and Glory, and not as under the Banner of any Party Men, how leading soever, to carry on little Interests separate from that of common Christianity. It is one of the first Stratagems by which the great Enemy of Christ and the Church, endeavoured to weaken the Power of the Ministerial Warfare, by sowing Divisions among the People about their Ministers, and tempting Ministers to set up for Heads of Parties. This Mystery of Iniquity began to work very early, 1 Cor. i. 12. *Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ; is Christ divided?* Chap. iii. 6. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every Man.* It would have been well for the Church of God, if the Successors of the Apostles would have been as careful to discourage such unjust

just respect of Persons as they were ; the Cause is not their own, but Christ's. Certain it is the Gospel Commission is but one, and it is from Christ, and is to be the Rule by which every Minister must manage his Ministerial Warfare ; and if he does not so, he striveth not lawfully, he is not the Servant of Christ, but of Man : and from Man, not from Christ, must he expect his Reward.

2. IN this Warfare the Ministers of Christ are not Enemies to the *Persons* of Men, but to their *Sins* ; and in being Enemies to their Sins, they are Friends to their Persons, for Sin is the Sinner's greatest Enemy ; and he that is an Enemy to mine Enemy, is a Friend to me. Foolish Sinners mistake this Point, they think faithful Ministers are their Enemies, because they reprove them, they threaten them, they muster up the Terrors and Curses of the Law against them, this they account an hostile Treatment ; with this evil Eye *Ahab* looked upon the Prophet *Elijah*, 1 Kings xxi. 20. *Hast thou found me, O mine Enemy ?* And some among the *Galatians* were so far corrupted, as to think *Paul* was become *their Enemy*, because he told them the Truth, Gal. iv. 16. Sinners love to be flattered in their Sins, tho' it be to their Ruin ; but all will be convinced at last, that Flatterers of Souls are Enemies and Murtherers of Souls, and that they only were their Friends, that dealt plainly and faithfully with them, and knowing the Terrors of the Lord, would gladly have

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have persuaded them to flee from the Wrath to come.

SIN is the great Enemy that the Gospel-Ministry has to encounter, and this Enemy must not be spared, Ministers must *reprove and rebuke with all Long-suffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. Now Sin has so possess'd itself of the Affections of the Soul of Man, that you cannot strike at Sin, but Sinners take it as if you struck at their very Hearts; especially if you bear too hard upon the *peccatum in deliciis*, their darling Sin; to reprove this in *Herod*, cost *John* the Baptist his Head; and yet every Minister has it in his Commission, to fight against neither small nor great, so much as against that Sin, for that is the Soul's most dangerous Enemy.

THE Ministers of the Gospel are instructed by their great Lord, so to manage their Warfare against Sin, as that at the same Time they may shew their Compassion to the Sinner, and Love to the precious Soul; and therefore they are not to be passionate, nor satyrical in their Reproofs; the Wrath of Man works not the Righteousness of God; *The Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all Men, apt to teach, patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth*; and even when it is necessary to rebuke sharply and openly, yet the greatest Care should be taken, not to shew any Contempt or Prejudice towards the Persons of Sinners, but all
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Tenderneſs, as a Father to his Children, that mixes Tears with his Rebukes ; ſuch Treatment is moſt like to prevail.

BUT if it ſhould not prevail, Miniſters are to learn of Chriſt, to weep over harden'd preiſhing Sinners, *Luke xix. 42. If thou haſt known, even thou at leaſt, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace !* One would think no Heart could withſtand the Force of ſuch Compaſſion.

3. THE Weapons of this Warfare are not carnal, but ſpiritual ; for tho' *we walk in the Fleſh*, we do not *war after the Fleſh*, 2 Cor. x. 3, 4. In this the Miniſters of Chriſt are manifeſted, and the Miniſters of Anti-Chriſt : Chriſt never allowed his Miniſters to propagate his Goſpel by Fire and Sword, by Racks and Gibbets : Theſe are the Weapons of Anti-Chriſtian Warfare. A Religion that has no innate Evidence and Excellence to recommend it to the Reaſon and Conſciences of Men, muſt be propagated by Force ; and Men muſt be terrify'd and tortur'd into that, of which they can never be rationally perſwaded. Theſe are the Methods by which Popery has choſen to recommend itſelf to the World ; the *Smithfield Fires*, the *Iriſh Maſſacres*, have been the Weapons of the Popiſh Warfare in theſe Nations, by which our Enemies have endeavour'd to re-eſtabliſh their Tyranny over the Conſciences of Men.

THE Miniſters of Chriſt have no ſuch Inſtructions, they are furniſhed with no other Weapons,

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Weapons, than such as are fit to convince and perswade reasonable Creatures; they have a Sword put into their Hands, but it is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: And this they are to study thoroughly, and to preach diligently, *in Season and out of Season*, and not content themselves with calling upon the Civil Magistrate, to supply (by Force) the Want of their own Labour and Diligence. These Weapons will, indeed, require more Pains to manage them aright; but then they will be much more effectual, for tho' they are *not carnal*, yet they are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong Holds, casting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Such a Conquest as this was never gained by carnal Weapons, nor ever will be.

GOSPEL Doctrines and Precepts, rightly open'd and explain'd, and soundly and seriously urged and applied in the preaching of the Gospel, and all follow'd with earnest Prayer and Supplication; these are the Weapons which Christ has furnished his Ministers with, and has many a time made effectual for the bringing stubborn Sinners to his Foot, and into the Bond of his Covenant.

AND if these were more constantly and diligently used, and less Stress laid upon Penal Laws and the Secular Power in all Reformed Churches, I am perswaded the Lord

Jesus

Jesus would take more Delight in them, and revive his Work more visibly among them.

4. THE Crown contended for in this Warfare is not earthly, but heavenly; as the Cause is not their own, no private Interest of their own, but the Cause and Interest of Heaven, so they expect not their Crown on Earth, but are well pleased that it *is laid up for them in Heaven*. They that strive for the Mastery here, *do it to obtain a corruptible Crown*, but the faithful Ministers of Christ, *an incorruptible*, 1 Cor. ix. 23. They contend not in this Warfare for a Despotick Power over the Persons of Men; and their Civil Rights, nor for a Dictatorial Power over their Consciences, and Dominion over their Faith; they strive not for Mittres and Titles, and Royalties, and large Revenues; the faithful Ministers of Christ know, *He that warreth must not intangle himself in the Affairs of this Life, but must please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier*, 2 Tim. ii. 4. He conquers not for himself, but for Christ; those he conquers, he desires not to make his own Servants, but Christ's Freemen; and he expects not a Crown of Gold, but a Crown of Righteousness; to be accepted of God thro' Christ; to be approved of Christ at last, and to be where Christ is; to be like unto Christ, and see him as he is: This is the Crown that he aims at, and justly prefers to all the Grandeur of the World; and even when he has received this Crown of Righteousness, he does not take it as what is due to him, or deserved by
D him;

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him, according to strict Justice, but as the Favour and Bounty of his great Lord, and with the rest of the Elders, *Rev. iv. 10. He falls down before him that sits upon the Throne, and worships him that lives for ever, and casts down his Crown before the Throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created.*

THIS is the Nature of the Ministerial Warfare. And now,

2. WE come to consider the Graces that are necessary for this Part of a Minister's Work; and here I shall not enlarge. One Grace proper to this Station, is Christian Courage, Zeal and Resolution; a Soldier must endure Hardness, and therefore should be of a bold and brave Spirit. *Paul puts Timothy in mind of this, 2 Tim. ii. 3. Thou therefore endure Hardness as a good Soldier of Christ.* The Christian Warfare will try a Man's Courage, the Ministerial Warfare will try it more; a Minister had need to have his Spirit raised up above both the Smiles and Frowns of the World; he must have the Rule over his own Spirit; nothing requires a more constant Calmness and Composure of Mind, than the Ministerial Warfare; a cool Courage is an excellent Qualification in one that has a Command in this War.

THE Ministry of the Gospel has always been the Butt and Mark of all the Rage of Earth and Hell; and the more Faithful any of the Mini-

Ministers of Christ are, the more Opposition they must expect to meet with. The great Enemy of Souls seldom fails to harrass the poor Ministers of Christ with his Temptations. I believe they are more violently assaulted than other Men, especially at their first engaging seriously in the Service; God turns this to their Advantage, for Temptation is one of those things that make a Minister; but in the mean while, they need a holy Fortitude to go on in their Work, when they feel such a Conflict in their own Souls.

WE often hear the Apostle *Paul* speaking of his Temptations, *Acts* xx. 18, 19. *Ye know from the first Day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you in all Seasons, serving the Lord with all Humility of Mind, and with many Tears and Temptations, &c.* and *Gal.* iv. 14. Thus in Conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ, his Ministers suffer *being tempted*, that they may experimentally know how to pity and comfort those *that are tempted*.

VIGILANCE and Circumspection are Graces very necessary for those that are engaged in this Warfare, that they may neither be surprized themselves, nor suffer others to be surprized by the common Enemy.

THIS Circumspection is the more necessary, because the Enemy knows how to transform himself into an Angel of Light, pretends to be on God's Side, perverts the Scripture, pleads it against itself, assumes the Christian Name, and pretends to outdo every

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Body in Zeal for the Honour of God and Christ; sets up Images of them, and commands that religious Worship be offered to the invisible Deity by those sensible Representations; pretends to be the Vicar and Vicegerent of Christ in the World, indued with his infallible Judgment, and with his absolute and unlimited Powers; and thus, under the Banner of Christ, this subtle Enemy carries on the most desperate Opposition to his Interest, and to all the Ends of his Mediatoral Office: Here now is the Faith and the Patience of the Saints to be tried to purpose.

AND which calls yet more, both for Vigilance and Resolution in the Ministers of the Gospel, there is something of this Enemy even in their own Hearts, remaining Corruption, which raises a Civil War in their Souls; two Armies, two Nations, Sin and Grace, the Flesh and the Spirit striving in them; they have themselves to conquer, their own Spirits to subdue; and none knows the Difficulty of this Warfare, but those that have heartily engaged in it.

3. LET me briefly hint at the Comfort and Joy that fills the Soul of a faithful Soldier of Christ, when the Warfare is well over.

THE Conflict will not last always, but it will last as long as Life lasts, and we must never put off our Armour till we put off the Body; sometimes the Heat and Brunt of the War is over before Death, and the End is peaceful and easy, spiritual Enemies in a great degree

degree conquered, Satan bound, wicked Men restrained, strong Holds pulled down, Sin mortified, Fears scattered, and the Soul beginning its Triumph even on this side Heaven.

SOMETIMES the sharpest Conflict is at the last; thus it was with the Captain of our Salvation; *This is your Hour and the Power of Darkness*, Luke xxii. 53. and no wonder if it be so with his Servants; but Death puts an End to all, then the good Fight is fought, and fought out well; and then, everlasting Joy shall be upon their Heads. For,

I. THE Difficulty is all over. A Soldier's Life is a Life of Difficulty, his Work is hard Work; the Work of a Minister is certainly so, if it be well followed; the Difficulties of this Work are described very emphatically in 2 Cor, vi. 4. *In all Things approving ourselves as Ministers of God in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings, by Pureness, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness, on the right Hand and on the left, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report and good Report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and yet behold we live, as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful yet alway rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having Nothing, and yet possessing all Things.*

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SUCH a variegated mixed State as this must be a State of great Trials; and these, when they are over, always afford the most pleasant Reflection.

2. THE Danger is over, as well as the Difficulty, and that is much more. Nothing distresses the Servants of God more in their holy Warfare, than fear of falling one Day by the Hands of the Enemy; this Fear has sometimes so far prevailed, as quite to dispirit them, and tempted them to take up the Resolution, that they will speak no more in the Name of the Lord; and if God did not give in gracious Supports, the Standard-bearers would often faint and sink down in Despondency. What Minister can bear the thought of having Satan triumph at last, not only over all his Services, but over his very Soul? But when the Battle is fought, this Danger is over, and his anxious Cares and Fears cease, and give Place to everlasting Joy; *I have fought a good Fight.* This is the first Account of the Work of a Minister, a holy Warfare. We now proceed to the

2. HE has a Race or Course to run. Here is a manifest Allusion to the Olympick Exercises; and the Apostle often uses the Gymnastick Phrases; particularly in *Phil. iii. 13, 14.* Brethren, *I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those Things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those Things that are before, I press toward the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in*
Christ

Christ Jesus. This Course of active Obedience and practical Religion, every Christian must run and finish, as well as every Minister; the Apostle to the *Hebrews* calls upon himself and every true Believer, *to lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that did easily beset them, and to run with Patience the Race set before them,* Heb. xii. 1.

BUT the Minister has a particular Concern in this Matter; for,

I. HE is to direct others in the Way in which they must run the Christian Race; it is a Way limited and marked out in the Word of God, and bounded in on the right Hand and on the left; within those Bounds they must carefully keep themselves, that ever expect to *finish their Course with Joy.* The Bible tells us what is Sin, and what is Duty, and it is the Rule by which we are to govern ourselves in the whole Course of our Life; if we do not run by this Rule, we may be very zealous and very diligent, and seem to make great Speed, but we are never the nearer, *we run as uncertainly,* if we keep not close to the Scripture: There are bye Ways on both Hands; on the right Hand *Superstition and Will-Worship*; on the left Hand *Profaneness and Immorality*; but the Bible is as a *Voice behind us, saying, This is the Way, walk in in it, when we are ready to turn aside to the right Hand or to the left,* Isa. xxx. 21. Now the Priests Lips should keep Knowledge, and the People should seek the Law at his Mouth; not with an implicit Faith, but searching the Scriptures,

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tures, to see whether the Things their Teachers tell them, be so or no, *Acts xvii. 11.* The Ministers of Christ must not devise Ways of their own, and mislead the People into them, but they must open and explain to them the Ways of God, as revealed in his Word; *the Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully; What is the Chaff to the Wheat? saith the Lord, Jer. xxiii. 28.* Our own Fancies and Opinions in Matters of Religion, are but Chaff and Dreams, and should never be offered to the People as the Word of God.

2. THE Gospel Minister is to go along with others in this Way and Course of Holiness, and to go before and lead them; he is to be an *Example to Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity, 1 Tim. iv. 12.* He is not to stand like a Mercurial Post in the High-way, pointing out the Way to others, but never moving one Step forward himself; his Language should be that of *Isa. ii. 5. O House of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the Light of the Lord: Not go ye, but come ye, and let us go together; let a Minister be never so orthodox in his Judgment, never so clear in his Preaching, if he be not exemplary in his Life, he can never finish his Course with Joy.* Too many satisfy themselves to call upon others to their Duty, and to commend them for it, and cry, *well run*, while they only stand by and observe the Motion of others; but let every one that is called a Minister of Christ

Christ know, he that stands by while others run, must stand by when others are crown'd.

3. HE is to excite and encourage others in their Christian Course, to caution all against sinful Wanderings, *to strengthen the weak Hands and feeble Knees, to say to those that are of a fearful Heart, be strong*; to this Purpose he is to set before them the Promises of God in his Work; such as these, *Isa. xl. 29, 30, 31. He giveth Power to the Faint; even the Youth shall faint and be weary, and the young Men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their Strength, they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint*: this is a very sweet and suitable Word to those that find themselves feeble and ready to faint in the Course of their Duty, and so is that in the following, *Chap. xli. Ver. 10. Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee by the right Hand of my Righteousness.*

THEY must set before the People the Example of the Lord Jesus Christ the Fore-runner, encouraging poor Souls to look unto *Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross and despised the Shame, and is set down at the right Hand of the Throne of God, Heb. xii. 2.*

THEY are to represent, in as lively a Manner as they can, the Mark which the Christian

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is running to, and the *Prize* that he is running for, that he may press forward *towards the Mark for the Prize*: The Mark is perfect Holiness in Conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ; the Prize is perfect Happiness, in full Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ; and they are to put Believers in Mind of these Things, that as soon as they have reached the Mark of perfect Holiness, they shall win and seize the Prize of perfect Happiness.

THEY are to put the People of God in mind, that their great Lord has called them out to run this Race, as the noble *Grecians* used to call out their favourite Servants and Subjects to the *Olympick* Exercises, and to look on and observe how they acquitted themselves therein, taking their Honour to be concerned in the Event: Thus has the Lord Jesus singled out Believers from the common Crowd, and called them forth as his Champions and Favourites; and he looks on and accounts himself honoured or dishonoured, according as they acquit themselves in it; and this, when considered, must greatly animate the Christian, so to run as that he may obtain, for it is the Prize of *High Calling* of God in Christ Jesus.

THIS is the Work of a Gospel-Minister, as described by a Race or Course that he is to run.

THE Graces proper and necessary for this Part, are Diligence, and Patience, and Perseverance; for the Way is straight and narrow, here is no room for sinful Diversions and Wanderings.

MANY

MANY Obstructions lie in the Way, at which they will be apt to stumble and be turned aside, without Diligence and Patience; and the Time appointed for finishing their Course is short, and woe to those whose Time is at an End before their Work be done.

WHEN this Course of Ministerial Duty is well finished, it affords unspeakable Joy, for then the faithful Minister has answered the End both of his Office and of his Being. He has answered the End of his Office, and the Obligations of his Ordination-Vows; it was a high Character that was then put upon him, and a high Calling that was then given him, and a hard Work that was then undertaken; and many a pensive Thought he has had, how to act up to his Character, how to answer the Calling, how to fulfil his Ministry; and therefore when all this is done, and well done even in Christ's own Account and gracious Acceptance, the Joy must be inexpressible; now he exonerates himself of all the Burthen of Care and Fear that he has been so long labouring under, and now he returns to his Rest.

AND he has in this answered the End of his Being, and can with Comfort reflect, that he has not been a sinful Burden upon the Face of the Earth, that he has not lived to no Purpose, and lost the Advantage of his Days; he can humbly and thankfully take up the Words of his blessed Lord, *For this End was I born, and for this Cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness unto the Truth*, John xviii.

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37. And therefore he has not, like the wicked and slothful Servant, any reason to wish that he had never been born, and to curse the Day in which he came into the World, desiring as Job in his impatient Fit, *That that Day might always be darkned, that God would not regard it from above, nor let the Light shine upon it, that Darkness and the Shadow of Death might always stain it, that the Cloud might dwell upon it, and the Blackness of the Day terrify it, that it might not be joined to the Days of the Tear, nor come into the Numbers of the Months, &c.* Job iii. 4, 5, 6.

An awful Description of the Horror that will at last fill the Souls of those that have forgotten and lost the End of their Being. Now the Joy and Pleasure must be equally great that those shall feel in themselves, that can through Grace say, they have answered the End of their Being, and though not perfectly, yet acceptably in Christ, finished the Work that God gave them to do.

3. THE Work of a Christian, and especially of a Minister, is further described by keeping the Faith, or the Trust committed to them; *I have kept the Faith.*

By the Faith we are not so much to understand the Grace of Faith wrought in the Apostle, as the Rule and Doctrine of Faith committed to him. This is committed to every Christian; it is the Faith delivered to the Saints, and to be contended for and kept entire to the coming of Christ; but it is in a more special and solemn Manner committed to the Mi-

Ministers of the Gospel, as a great and sacred Trust.

I. CHRIST has committed to his Ministers the *Rule* of Faith, to kept inviolable and entire. The Rule of Faith, you very well know, is the written Word of God, the blessed Bible, the great Treasure of the Church of God; this Treasure God expects his Ministers should most carefully and faithfully preserve; and how?

I. THEY are to maintain the *Authority* of the Bible, as containing the Oracles of God, and the Rule of Faith and Practice: Whenever the divine Authority and Original of the Bible is denied or disputed, as it has been in a very daring manner, by the Infidels of our Age and Nation, no Christian should think himself unconcerned; but those whom God has *counted faithful, putting them into the Ministry*, are especially obliged to *contend earnestly for it*, as they have Opportunity and Ability, both from the Pulpit and from the Press; but then this must be done in a Way suitable to the Spirit and Tenour of that Bible which they defend, not by calling for *Fire from Heaven* to destroy the Gainsayers, nor calling for the Thunder of Church Censures and Anathema's; for what *have we to do to judge those that are without?* as all those certainly are that openly deny the Authority of the Scriptures; nor presently calling for the Sword of the Magistrate *to cut off those that trouble them*, unless the publick Peace be broken by the Violence of the Church's Enemies.

BUT

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BUT the Authority of the Bible must be vindicated by sober and solid Reasoning, *Sound Speech that cannot be condemned, that they that are of the contrary Part may be ashamed,* Titus ii. 8. And God has always raised up those in the Church, that have been able to stop the Mouths of Gainsayers ; and there was never yet in any Age of Christianity, any vehement Opposition made to the Authority of the Scriptures, but they have been so well defended by solid Learning and Argument, that Truth has triumphed, and its Enemies have quitted the Field and the Dispute with Shame.

AND it is the Duty of every Minister to fit and furnish himself for the Defence of this great Truth, and *to hold fast the faithful Word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince the Gainsayers,* Titus i. 9.

2. THEY are to maintain the Purity of the Bible against all those that would corrupt it ; it is therefore highly requisite that they should understand the original Text, and be able to draw the Waters of the Sanctuary from the Fountain-head, and that at least in every Nation there should be such as are acquainted with ancient Manuscripts, that they may be able to discover any Attempt that shall be made by Men of corrupt Minds, to poison those sacred Springs ; indeed the Providence of God has been very vigilant about this Matter, and has found Means and Instruments to guard the Purity of the Scriptures as its peculiar Charge ; and the Ministers

sters of Christ should look on this as a great Part of the Trust committed to them. This was more difficult when any of the divine Oracles were delivered only by Oral Tradition, and before the Canon of Scripture was completed, the Autographs collected, and authentick Copies given out; and therefore the Apostle saw it needful to press this very earnestly upon Timothy in his Day, 2 Tim. i. 15. *Hold fast the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love which are in Christ Jesus; That good Thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us;* where it is observable that the Spirit of God dwelt in the Apostles and Evangelists, not only to enable them to indite the Canon of Scripture, but to keep and preserve these Inspirations, that they might be delivered to the Saints without Mistake or Corruption; but then this Indwelling of the Holy Ghost for this Purpose did not supersede their diligent Care, but assisted it and rendered it effectual.

3. THEY are to maintain the *Sufficiency and Perfection* of the Scriptures, as the entire and only Rule of Faith and Practice. Even among those that admit the Bible to be the Rule of Faith, there are some that will not allow it to be the perfect Rule, but set up something else, tho' not in direct opposition to it, yet as Co-ordinate with it and perfective of it: Thus the Papists have advanced, the Decrees of Popes and the Canons of Councils into the Place

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Place of an additional Rule. And some others have endeavoured to obtrude their own pretended Inspirations and Predictions upon the Church of God, as of the very same Authority with the Bible.

It is the Duty of the Ministers of Christ, to contend for the *Perfection* of the Bible, that it contains in it all Things necessary to Salvation, and all Things necessary to Church-Communion and Order of Worship; and tho' these Articles of Faith may be collected into a methodical System, and the Rules of Life and divine Worship, laid down in the Word, may be very warrantably drawn together for our Direction, yet nothing in the one Case or the other is to be added, diminished or changed, but every thing must be left to stand upon the Authority of the written Word.

2. OUR Lord Jesus has not only committed to his People the *Rule* of Faith, but the *Doctrines* of Faith, as they are contained in that *Rule*; these Doctrines are to be plainly and faithfully held forth by the Preaching of the Word; and tho' none of the Doctrines of Faith are to be concealed, but the whole Counsel of God opened to Men, yet those Doctrines that are the very *Foundation* of Christianity must especially be inculcated upon the Minds of the People; the Apostle puts a peculiar Mark upon some Points of Doctrine, *as faithful Sayings*, 1 Tim. i. 15. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I*



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am Chief; and so, 1 Tim. iv. 8, 9. Bodily Exercise profiteth little, but Godliness is profitable unto all Things, and hath the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come; this is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation; and, 2 Tim. ii. 11. It is a faithful Saying, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him, if we suffer we shall also reign with him, if we deny him, he will also deny us: And again, Tit. iii. 8. This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, That they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good Works.

WHEN the Apostle calls these *faithful Sayings*, he seems to me to mean something more than that they are *barely true*, for so are all the Words of God, but they are Doctrines of that Weight and Importance to the Souls of Men, that every Minister is bound in *Faithfulness* to insist often and much upon them; such Preaching is *faithful Preaching*: That Minister that dwells upon these Foundation-Truths, both doctrinal and practical, approves himself a *faithful Minister*.

THE great Doctrines of the Trinity; the Godhead of Christ; of the propitiatory Nature of the Sufferings of Christ; of Justification by his Righteousness imputed to us, and received by Faith; the effectual Operations of the Spirit of God, as necessary to our Sanctification; the Necessity of real and practical Holiness, and of worshipping God according to his Word, in the Name of Christ, and in

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the Communion of Saints : These and many
more the Church of God has always account-
ed *faithful Sayings*, and has contended earnest-
ly for them, and would never suffer them to
be wrested out of her Hands ; and from the
Testimony of Scripture and common spiritual
Sense and Experience of the most serious Chri-
stians, they have been recommended and hand-
ed down from one Generation of Believers to
another. These great Truths the Ministers of
the Gospel are intrusted with, both to keep
them uncorrupt themselves, and to transmit
to others that are rising up in the Church :
Thus Paul speaks to Timothy, 2 Epist. ii. 2. *The*
Things which thou hast heard of me among many
Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men,
who shall be able to teach others also.

Now the Graces that are proper for this
Part of the Ministerial Work, are *Wisdom* and
Fidelity ; Wisdom to discern Truth from Er-
ror, however disguised ; and Fidelity, to ad-
here to the Truth, how much soever op-
posed in the World. The great and fun-
damental Articles of the Christian Religion,
have been often combated and quarrelled
by Men of perverse Minds ; almost every Arti-
cle has had its Turn and its Time of Oppo-
sition ; and there is almost in every Age some
particular Gospel-Truth, that may be called
the *present Truth* ; the Truth that meets with
present Contradiction ; and it is a good Thing
to be established *ἐν τῇ παρόντι ἀληθείᾳ*, in the *present*
Truth, 2 Pet. i. 12.

FAITH-

FAITHFULNESS to Christ in keeping that Faith and Trust which he has committed to his Servants, will afford them a most comfortable Reflection, when the Trial is come to an end; there is nothing sits heavier, even upon natural Conscience, than *betraying a Trust*, being *false* to those that have *confided in us*, but Fidelity is the Honour of a Man, and of a Minister, and will be his Comfort living and dying.

THIS Trust is of that Nature and Consequence to the Souls of others, as well as to his own, that a Minister, conscious of his own Fidelity, has great reason to take Comfort: The Purity of Faith and Worship, is the Food and Nourishment of precious Souls; if these be corrupted, they convey spiritual Distempers instead of Health and Vigour to them.

AND since this Impurity of Doctrine and Practice, where-ever it is admitted, spreads like a Leaven, and eats like a Gangrene; those that have contended against it, and have kept the Faith, have therein consulted the Good of Posterity, and of Ages and Generations yet to come. Who knows not how much reason we of this Age and Nation have to bless God for the Courage and Fidelity of the Martyrs in the *Marian* Days, that would die for the Faith rather than depart from it, and would *keep* the Faith, though they *lost* their Lives; had they then basely betrayed their Trust, and given up the Purity of Faith and Religion, we can conclude no other, than that it had been lost in *England*, and we their Posterity

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had been nursed up in the filthy Errors and Abominations of Popery.

I SHALL add no more concerning this first General, the pleasant Retrospect that the Apostle had when he stood upon the Confines of Eternity; he could look back upon his past Life and Labours with Comfort and with that Rejoicing that results from the Testimony of a good Conscience; *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith.*

AND now I come in the

II. PLACE to consider the pleasant Prospect that he had before him; *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give unto me; and not to me only, but to all those also that love his Appearance.*

HERE the Apostle was able, by Faith, to look on Things unseen and eternal; the Heavens were opened to his believing Soul, and he saw that which lay within the Vail; and let us take his own Account of it, for if in such Things as these we give the loose to our own Fancies, we shall but discover our own Folly, and darken Counsel by Words without Knowledge.

I. THE Apostle had the Prospect of a Crown, an heavenly Crown; a Crown is a glorious Thing, so it is accounted, though it be but an earthly Crown; Men will wade through Fields and Seas of Blood to obtain a Crown, and yet they strive but for a *corruptible* one; a Crown is the Ensign of Authority and Honour, of Plenty and Pleasure. When the Ser-

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vants of Christ have done their Work well, they shall be treated no longer like *Servants*, but like *Princes*: Matt. xxv. 21. *Well done, good and faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few Things, I will make thee Ruler over many Things; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* See the glorious Change made in the State of these faithful Ones, from *Servants* to *Rulers*: A Crown supposes a Kingdom, or else it is but a Piece of Pageantry; the Crown that is laid up for faithful Ministers and Christians, has a Kingdom belonging to it; Luke xxii. 28, 29. *Ye are they which have continued with me in my Temptations, and I appoint you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* This Crown and this Kingdom which Christ has appointed for those that have continued with him in his Temptations, are not like the Crowns and Kingdoms of this World, troublesome, thorny, tottering, fading Things, but easy and steady, safe, and such as cannot be shaken.

2. THIS great Honour he saw was sufficiently secured to him; *it is laid up.* Where? Why in Heaven, where no Thieves can break through and steal; it is hid with Christ in God, not only so hid as that it cannot be *seen*, but so hid as that it cannot be *lost*, it is yet in Reversion, but the Settlement is so strong that it can never be broken. It is laid up in the Hands of Christ, he purchased it for his Servants, and he keeps it for them till they are thoroughly prepared to receive it. *The Inheri-*

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tance is reserved in Heaven for them, 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. And they are kept by the mighty Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last Time.

3. HE beheld this Crown as very near, *Henceforth there is laid up for me*; from the very Moment that I shall have finished my Course, the Crown is ready, it was laid up before, the Kingdom was *prepared from the Foundation of the World*; it does not begin to be laid up when the Servant of God has finished his Course, but then it will be brought forth and put upon the Head of the happy Soul; he is no sooner *unclothed* of the earthly House of the Body; but he *is clothed upon* with the House which is from Heaven, with an heavenly Glory; no sooner has the Soul *reached the Mark*, but he *wins and wears the Prize*, that very Day he is with Christ in Paradise; between Death and Heaven there's no Interval, either of spiritual Refinings, or of deep and dead Slumbers, but an immediate Passage into Glory; no sooner *absent from* the Body, but *present with the Lord*.

4. THIS Crown is a *Crown of Righteousness*; not that it is deservedly due to the imperfect Services of the Saints, but it is a Crown that Christ, who is *the Lord their Righteousness*, has purchased for them; and therefore God can now bestow it upon them, without doing any Wrong to Himself, to the Honour of His Law and Government; this is the great Excellency of this Crown: The Servants of God
could

could not wear this Crown with any Pleasure or Satisfaction, if they could not wear it without Dishonour or Dissatisfaction to the Justice of God. Should Divine Justice behold them wearing this Crown with a dissatisfied Eye, it would presently become their Burthen, and not their Honour; but they rejoice in it as a Crown of Righteousness, and the Righteousness of Christ is the brightest Jewel in that Crown; and now they know not only that the Righteousness of God will *admit* of their wearing this Crown, but will be *manifested* and *glorified* thereby; God is *faithful and just* in putting this Honour upon them, 1 John i. 9. He declares his Righteousness in pardoning and saving them; for the great Propitiation has thus provided, that *God may be just, and the Justifier of those that believe on Jesus*, Rom. iii. 26.

5. THERE is a certain *glorious Day* coming in which the Lord Jesus will give this Crown to his faithful Servants in the most publick Manner, in the sight of all the World; and this is the Day of Christ's Appearance, a Day loved and longed for by the Saints: then that Crown which before they enjoyed but in the *Measure of a Part*, shall now be given to *their whole Persons*; and that which before was done by a *more particular Act*, shall be done with all the Solemnities of *publick Judgment*; that Day, the Apostle calls it *that great Day*, so much thought of, so often spoke of by the Apostles and the Primitive Saints; *that Day* will be their Coronation-Day; Christ himself will set
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the Crown of Righteousness upon their Heads in the sight of all, both Friends and Enemies, and will let all see, that they have, through Him, a Right unto it; and this will greatly add to the Glory of it.

6. IT will be no diminution of this Honour, that it shall not be given to some particular Persons only, but to all those that love Christ and His Appearance.

IN this World the Honour of one Man is thought to put an Eclipse upon another; and that is scarce accounted any Honour at all, that has a great many to share in it. Such Emulation, Selfishness and Narrowness of Spirit prevails at present in the Nature of Man.

BUT then the Souls of God's People shall be refined and enlarged, made like unto the Mind of Christ; the Rectitude of the Soul of Man is then recovered and made perfect, and some think that is the meaning of *the Crown of Righteousness*; that as Original Righteousness was the Crown and Dignity of the Nature of Man in Paradise, so this restored Righteousness, when it is made perfect, will be the everlasting Crown and Glory of the Saints in Heaven; Envy and Selfishness have then no more Place in them for ever.

THEN they shall see there is enough for them all in God and in Heaven, Fulness of Joy, many Mansions, none will be straitned for those that come in among them.

NAY, their Love to Christ will then be so pure and perfect, that the Honour and Happiness

pinests bestowed upon every Member and Servant of His, will be accounted an Addition to their own; as it will be the Honour of Christ, the Head of the Church, to have His Body compleat and perfect, so it will be the Honour of every Member to belong to that perfected Body.

AND it will be a particular Satisfaction to faithful Ministers, to see the heavenly Crown not only bestowed upon themselves, but upon the People, and especially upon those to whom they ministred in the Name of Christ; the Salvation of these will be their Minister's Crown and Joy, in the Day of the Lord Jesus; *For what is our Hope, or Joy, or Crown of Rejoycing? Are not even ye in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? For ye are our Glory and our Joy.* 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20.

BUT the Joy of faithful Ministers will not be confined to those, whose Souls they were in a more special manner charged with on Earth; but then all lesser Distinctions will cease, all particular Assemblies will coalesce into the one general Assembly and Church of the First-born, and their common Relation to Christ the Head, will in a manner swallow up all other Considerations. Such will be the Temper of the Spirits of just Men, when they are made perfect.

THIS is the best Account I am able to give of the glorious Views the Apostle had when he stood upon the Confines of both Worlds; it is taken all from his own Words, and I

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hope I have not mistaken the Meaning of them; tho' I am far from thinking I have taken in all, that he had in his Mind when he broke out into this holy Triumph, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearance.*

THAT which remains, is to bring these Things home to ourselves by a particular Application. And,

I. IF the faithful Servants of Christ may have such pleasant Views as these, when they are leaving Time, and launching out into Eternity, what dismal Views and Apprehensions must those have at such a Time, whose Consciences tell them they have been altogether false and unfaithful? Judge of this by the Rule of Contraries, their Condition must be quite the Reverse to the former.

IF they look back upon Time past and gone, Conscience must tell them they have not *fought the good Fight*, nor *finished the Course* of their Duty, nor kept the *Faith* and *Trust* committed to them; they have done nothing of all this. Let us lay our Ear to the sad Complaints of these unfaithful Ones in their dying Moments, and we may expect to hear this doleful Language from them.

I have not fought the good Fight, I have been fighting against God, against Conscience
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all my Days, I have been quarrelling with my Fellow Servants, and smiting them with Reproaches and Abuses; but I have never heartily fought against Sin in myself, or in others; I have yielded to the Power of Corruption and Temptation; I have yielded myself to Satan, and he has led me Captive at his Will.

I HAVE finished the Course of *my Life*, but not the Course of *my Duty*; I am as far from God, as when I first set out in the World; I have not confined myself within the Bounds of the Word of God; my Life has been nothing but sinful Wandrings from God; I have been so far from encouraging others to run the Ways of God's Commandments, that I have discouraged them and thrown Stumbling-blocks in their Way; I have been so far from leading Souls to Christ, that I have by my Example led them into Sin; and now my Glass is run, my Time is gone, and I have not taken one true Step towards God and Heaven.

I CANNOT say that I have kept the Faith; I have never from the Heart believed the Gospel; I have said I believed it, and sometimes thought I believed it, but now I too late perceive my Faith has been but a dead, cold, and wavering Opinion; I have not received the Truth in the Love of it; I have held the Truth in Unrighteousness; I have not held the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience. In Points of Doctrine and Divine Worship, I have had a greater Regard to Custom than Conscience, and to the Will of Men than

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to the Word of God ; I have not been faithful to Christ, nor to the Souls of Men ; I undertook the Charge rashly and inconsiderately, and have not kept that which was committed to my Trust.

THIS is a dismal Peal for Conscience to ring in the Ear of a poor dying Creature ; and yet this is the Truth of their Case, who have lived all their Days wicked and slothful Servants in the Family of Christ.

AND if the Retrospect be so terrible, the Prospect of what lies before them is not less so, but much more ; no Crown of Righteousness remains for them, nothing but Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, the awful Frowns of their injur'd Lord, much more dreadful than Death itself, *Thou wicked and slothful Servant, depart from me accursed into everlasting Fire.* I shall add no more, my Spirit fails in meditating such Terror.

I DENY not but while the Soul of a Sinner, upon the Confines of Eternity, has such dreadful Views as these on each Hand, God may in sovereign Mercy give Repentance, Death-bed Repentance, which may be true, tho' very late, and the blessed merciful Jesus may pluck some such as Brands out of the Fire ; but I think such Instances are very rare, and it is worthy of the Wisdom and Holiness of God that they should be but rare ; and whenever there is any such, there is something more wonderful than that of the Thief on the Cross ; and if ever such are saved at last, they are brought

brought to Heaven by the very Gates of Hell, and so saved as by Fire.

2. LET us all heartily engage in the Christian Course and Warfare, Ministers and Hearers, that though we cannot yet say, the *Battle is fought* and the *Course is finished*, we may be able to say, our *Warfare is begun*, and we are in earnest *set out* for Heaven; if we can but truly say thus much, it will afford us Comfort. Others have fought it out and finished well, it is happy for them; and if we are indeed fighting against Sin and Satan, and all our spiritual Enemies, we have reason to hope it will be well with us; it's good to be in the Way, tho' we are not yet come to the End. This same blessed Apostle that now could say, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course*, could not always say so, no, not after his Conversion; at another Time you hear him speaking in another Strain, *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after: I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one Thing I do, forgetting the Things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those Things that are before, I press forward towards the Mark, for the Prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

3. WHILE you are pressing forward in your Christian Course and Warfare, fear not to fix your Eye upon the glorious Mark and Prize, this you may do without betraying a selfish or a mercenary Spirit; *Moses* had respect to the Recompence of Reward, and our Lord Je-
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sus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith,
for the Joy that was set before him, endured the
Cross and despised the Shame. You can follow
 no better Example; you will have need of
 all the Encouragements that the Word of
 God affords you. The Battle will be hot be-
 fore it be over, we know not how hot it may
 prove in our Day; the *Helmet* that must cover
 your Head, is the *Hope of Salvation*. Christ
 himself from Heaven calls upon his Servants
 that are in the midst of the Battle, *Hold fast*
that which thou hast, that no Man take thy Crown;
be thou faithful to Death, and I will give thee the
Crown of Life, Rev. ii. 10. He holds the Crown
 in his Hand, and presents it to the View of
 Faith, that this lively Hope may inspire your
 Souls with Courage and Resolution; despise
 not these Helps that he has given you. Why
 were the Heavens opened to the blessed Mar-
 tyr *Stephen*? Why had he a sight of the Glory
 of God, and of Jesus Christ standing on the
 Right Hand of God? Surely it was that he
 might encounter Sufferings and Death with
 greater Comfort and Courage; it would be
 spiritual Pride in you to think that you can
 be more disinterested in your Obedience than
 he was. Tho' the Recompence of Reward
 be not of Debt, but of Grace, it does not de-
 serve to be less regarded by you, nor will it
 afford you less Encouragement, but more and
 greater: Fear not then, fail not, to keep your
 Eye and Expectation upon this Crown of
 Righteousness; *For this Cause you will not faint;*
but

but though the outward Man perish, your inward Man will be renewed Day by Day; for your light Affliction, that is but for a Moment, shall work for you a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, while you look not at the Things that are seen, but at the Things that are not seen; for the Things that are seen are Temporal, but the Things that are not seen are Eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18.

4. LET us learn hereby to regulate our Sorrows for the Death of those excellent Ones, that in the Valley of the Shadow of Death enjoy'd these comfortable Views and Prospects.

THEIR eminent Faithfulness in their Spiritual Course and Warfare, approved by the great God, and attested by his Spirit in their dying Hours, should raise our Esteem of them, and should make us very sensible how much we are Losers by their Departure from us; a faithful Christian, a faithful Minister, is a great, a publick Blessing, the Death of such is a publick Loss; their Death is precious in the sight of God, and their Memory must be precious to us; this Age does not super-abound in Persons of such a Spirit, that we should part with them without an affectionate Sorrow and Sense of our Loss.

BUT then the comfortable Views which their Souls had, when upon the Confines of both Worlds, forbid our Sorrowing, as they that have no Hope; they were pleased at the coming of their Lord, why should we be displeased?

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pleased? I know the Death of such Persons has not the same Aspect to this World, as it has to themselves; to them it has a bright side, but it turns the dark side to us that are left behind. They enter into Rest, they are taken away from the Evil to come; to them *Death is Rest*, to us a *Token of approaching Evil*; but yet we must not charge God foolishly, but rather double our Diligence, that we also may be ready.

You of this Congregation have reason to rejoice that God continued your faithful Minister so long with you, and made him so Acceptable and so Useful to you; and you have reason to be thankful, that when God took him away from you, he did not hide his Face from him, and suffer his Sun to set under a Cloud.

You all know Mr. *Shower* was naturally of a very tender and timorous Spirit; it was the Grace of God working in him mightily, that made him rejoice in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and gave him a Boldness and Chearfulness, so much beyond his natural Disposition.

It was very affecting and very encouraging to hear him, under the Apprehensions of Death, admiring the Goodness of God; of this I am a Witness, when I enquired of him, how it was with him? He answered with a Smile, *I am bad, very bad, but God is good, my God is very good, he is very good to me*; and others can tell, how after he had a little recovered himself

out of a Fainting-Fit, in which he appeared to be dying, he said, *He could have desired then to have gone, if it had been the Will of God, for (says he) I thought my Soul was got above every thing in this World.*

SIRS, this was a great Honour that God put upon your Minister when he took him from you, and it should be a great Establishment unto you; not only making his Name and Memory precious to you, considering the End of his Conversation, but obliging you to have the greater Regard to his Prayers, his Sermons, and all the good Books he has published among you, for now you see you had in them the real Sense and Language of his Soul; he believed the Things that he spoke, *and therefore spoke them*, and spoke them so fervently, *because he from the Heart believed them*; he could trust to that Gospel when he died, which he had preached to you while he lived: *Whatever therefore of the Gospel of Christ you have learned, and received, and heard, and seen in him, do; and the God of Peace shall be with you.*

F I N I S.

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